



#39

\$1.50

Jersey Beat

DAS DAMEN

**Bass Players:
Things That
Go Thump In
The Night**

Supertouch

Big Wheel

**Best of 1989
Lists**

Lots of reviews

JERSEY BEAT

JERSEY BEAT

Happy new year, everybody, and welcome to the 90's. It's almost embarrassing to admit this, but 1989 was my 7th year of doing a fanzine and probably the most enjoyable year so far. A big part of that is that we're finally breaking even (well, almost) financially. Also, the indie network or underground or whatever you want to call it has started to embrace fanzines like you wouldn't believe; which means, besides the hundreds of free records and tapes that come every year, I've also been able to check out the New Music Seminar and the CMJ convention for free. I even went to Austin, Texas, in 1989 for their version of NMS, called South By Southwest (or SXSW), which was a ton o' fun, believe me.

Anyway, what that means is that you'll probably have us to kick around for at least a while into the next decade. Musically, I don't think the 80's were as memorable or exciting as the 60's and 70's; when I started trying to list my Top Ten records for the decade, I was started to find that the first four I thought of were from 1980 or 1979. Here's the final list, a tad predictable perhaps but then it wouldn't be very representative if the choices didn't pop up on at least a few other people's lists...

Top Ten Records Of The 1980's (More Or Less Chronological Order)

1. Bruce Springsteen - The River
2. The Clash - London Calling
3. The Feelies - Crazy Rhythms
4. The dBs - Repercussion
5. R.E.M. - Murmur
6. Minor Threat - Out Of Step
7. Husker Du - Metal Circus
8. The Replacements - Let It Be
9. The Windbreakers - Terminal
10. Squirrel Bait - Skag Heaven/Squirrel Bait CD

The list is based on how much I actually went back and listened to these records, how much the individual artists meant to me in the course of the decade, and the influence they had on the rest of the decade. Almost any Husker Du record could have made the list, but "Diane" from Metal Circus still scares me after almost ten years of listening to it, no mean achievement. There are other bands who might've made the list - the Bongos, Sonic Youth, Dinosaur (Jr.), Das Damen, Smithereens...God, it's endless. And lots of local bands who gave me much joy in the clubs deserve a mention; again, a partial listing would include Mod Fun, the Alter Boys, Adrenalin O.D., the Bongos, Kraut, the Feelies and all their offshoot bands, the Splatcats, and the Disturbed. Special thanks to everybody at Maxwells, the Court Tavern, and CBGB, my three favorite clubs, and to the many, many people who've helped me make Jersey Beat possible for the past seven and a half years, especially the ones who were there when we started: Patti Kleinke, Howard Wuelfing (who started it all), the late Pat Clarke (still miss ya, pal), Steve Fallon, Bill Ryan, Bobby Albert, Johnny Dirt, Lyle Hysen (an inspiration then, and now), and Bruce Gallanter. And to anybody I forgot to mention, well, I'll thank you at the end of next decade, ok?

- Jim Testa
January, 1990

Editor & Publisher

Jim Testa

And the usual gang of idiots...

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L.Cravat
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THE WINDBREAKERS

At Home With Bobby & Tim (DB)

Forget the Stones. Never mind the Buzzcocks. The reunion of 1989 had to be Tim Lee and Bobby Sutliff getting back together to record this lp and tour. Not since Terminal (Jersey Beat Record Of The year, 1985, you could look it up) have these two Southern popsters been able to put up with one another long enough to collaborate on another record, but the results are pure pop heaven. Sutliff leavens all of Lee's rough edges and garagier instincts, while Lee keeps Sutliff's mushier side from turning songs into pablum. These tunes rock, they roll, and you can hum them on the way to work in the morning. I do.

LUCINDA WILLIAMS

Passionate Kisses EP (Rough Trade)

Contrary to some of my critics, not all the bands I listen to are 16 years old and dressed in black leather jackets. Lucinda Williams is an Austin songbird, sort of a latterday Linda Ronstadt, whose music combines Ronstadt's laid-back L.A. insouciance with a hipper, more contemporary country/rock feel. The only important thing is that voice, though. It sends shivers.

THE EFFIGIES

Contents Nonviewable (Roadkill)

Long out of print, the Effigies' best songs helped lay the groundwork for the Chicago hardcore scene that also spawned Naked Raygun, Riflesport, and of course Steve Albini. These songs still sound great, gruff broad-shouldered punk rock, and John Kezdy has provided some in-depth liner notes full of anecdotes and band history. A must-have for hc fans.

THE MAGNOLIAS

Dime Store Dream (Twin/Tone)

You could argue that Twin/Tone has been looking for The New Replacements ever since the Replacements left them for A&M, and there certainly are a lot of similarities with the Magnolias - a charismatic, waiflike lead singer/songwriter who's afraid of girls and a sloppy, charismatic garage band full of catchy good hooks and rockin' tunes. Okay, so maybe the Magnolias are the new Replacements; this is still the best garage-rock lp I've heard all year, a near-miss for my Ten Best list. The songs sound great and you actually remember them, the lyrics are clever and funny and heartfelt, and nobody in this band has a drinking problem. When you make records this good, you don't have to be "the new" anybody, as long as they stay themselves they'll be allright.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

And hello again. The last time we talked - remember, back in the Eighties? - there was this dumb idea I had about changing the name or something. And thank you to all the readers who sent in so many scintillating suggestions for new names for this fanzine. I won't go into all of them just now, but let's just say that after reviewing my options, I decided Jersey Beat wasn't so bad after all. So the name stays, for as long as I do, and we'll just cheat a little bit and occasionally interview a band that doesn't live within a 40-mile radius of Hoboken, ok? And if you don't tell anybody, I won't either. Just to start the decade off right, we start the new protocol this issue with one of the coolest bands I came across in 1989, Big Wheel from Louisville, Kentucky. Where we go from here is anybody's guess, but I'm open to suggestions.

Ok, point number two. You will notice sprinkled throughout this issue a larger-than-usual number of major label records being reviewed. This is because major labels have suddenly decided that fanzines are sexy; so the nice folks at A&M, Atlantic, CBS, and so on are stuffing the ol' Testa mailbox with boxes of goodies. Some of this stuff is pretty cool, too. A&M sends CDs and RCA sent this neat Swatch for Christmas. Anyway, we will continue to evaluate this situation on an issue by issue basis, but here are my thoughts at the moment: Cool bands are cool bands; I'd find something nice to say about Eleventh Dream Day whether they were on Atlantic or Roadkill Records. But puny little Roadkill has already bought some advertising in this fanzine; so has Caroline, Homestead, Buy Our, and several other small labels through the years. None of the big guys have demonstrated any desire to advertise yet, and that bothers me. See, the big labels are hiring these "alternative marketing departments" and deluging fanzines like this one with promo records and phone calls asking us to interview their bands. They want to take full advantage of this enormous network we do-it-yourselves have established, but they also seem to want the Carolines and Homesteads to pay for it all. That sucks. Stay tuned for further developments.

So what happened to NJ in the 80's? Skid Row made it; Hoboken didn't. Bruce Springsteen started out the decade as the closest thing to a true working-class hero since Elvis; somewhere along the way, he dumped his wife for that bimbo girl singer, released a couple of boring, self-important concept lps, and ended the 80's by summarily firing the E Street Band, with whom he'd worked for the last 15 years. Mr. Springsteen, you're a bum. Get outta here.

There are more live reviews than usual in this issue - something else that's new. I don't really approve of the way most fanzines do show reviews; you know, the one-paragraph "missed the first band, the second band rocked, the third band sucked, then I left and missed the last band" kind of review. So in "Diary Of A Rock Critic," we try to touch a lot of bases - not just what the band was like, but what the night was like... How many people showed up? And who were they? How much were the beers? What did people wear - not just the band, but the audience. Stuff like that.

Here is my wish for the 90's: That no band makes an album before it's ready. That no worthy album goes unheard or unreleased. That no worthy band be unable to play in front of appreciative audiences, for a decent wage. And that all our readers greet the new decade with open minds, clear heads, good health, and high spirits.

Happy new year, everybody. Now let's get back to work.

- Jim Testa
January, 1990

The Faces Of 89

Photo by Michele



Chris
Soundgarden

Photo by Michele Taylor



Dain

Photo by Michele



Kreator



Robbie
Goo Goo Dolls

Photo by Ken Salerno



Dale
Steel Pole Bath Tub



Windbreakers



Bobby
Soulside



Photo by Ken Salerno **Andrew**
Rollins Band

Best Of 89

JIM TESTA

Top Ten Albums

1. Goo Goo Dolls - Jed (Metal Blade)
2. Das Damen - Mousetrap (TwinTone)
3. Smithereens - Smithereens 11 (Capitol)
4. Bob Dylan - Oh Mercy (CBS)
5. Operation Ivy - Energy (Lookout)
6. Steel Pole Bath tub - Butterfly Love (Boner)
7. Windbreakers - At Home W/ Bobby & Tim (DB)
8. Bullet Lavolta - The Gift (Taang)
9. Lucinda Williams - Passionate Kisses (Rough Trade)
10. American Standard - Wonderland (Powerhouse)

Runners Up: Fugazi, Magnolias, Poster Children, Big Wheel, Effigies, Eleventh Dream Day, Underdog

Singles/EP's

1. Green Day - 1000 Hours EP
2. Soulside - Bass ep
3. Pink Lincolns - Cotton Mather 45
4. Friction Wheel - 45
5. Ultra Vivid Scene - Mercy Seat 12"

Cassettes

1. New York Scum Rock Live (ROIR)
2. Orifice - A Pretty Nice Guy...
3. Mile One - Coolidge's Suitcase

BEN WEASEL

Top 10 Records In No Particular Order

1. Crimpshine - Lame Gig Contest lp
2. Sloppy Seconds - Destroyed lp
3. Dickies - Second Coming lp
4. Pink Lincolns - Cotton Mather/I Do 45
5. Mr T Experience - Big Black Bugs... lp
6. Jawbreaker 7"
7. Bad Religion - Suffer lp
8. Crimpshine - Quit Talkin, Claude 7"

DEBI ROTMIL

My Fave Top Ten Albums In 1989

1. Pixies - Doolittle
2. Throwing Muses - Hunkpapa
3. Public Image Ltd. - 9
4. Bob Mould - "Compositions For The Young And Old"
5. The Cure - Disintegration
6. The Wygals - Honeyocks In The Withersoevers
7. Kate Bush - The Sensual World
8. Red Hot Chili Peppers - Mothers Milk
9. Janes Addiction - "Jane Says" 45
10. The Selves - Drinks And Plenty Of 'Em

JOHN LISA

My Top Ten

1. All - Allroys Revenge lp
2. Chemical People - X-Feminist 45
Hard Ons - Love Is A Battlefield lp
3. Melvins - Ozma lp
4. Doughbous - Home Again lp
5. Jawbreaker - Busy 45
6. American Standard - Wonderland lp
7. Poison Idea - Just To Get Away picture disc 45
8. Greed Day - 1000 Hours ep
9. Kreator - Extreme Aggression lp
10. Das Damen - Sad Mile 45

Band of the Year: ALL Best lp, great live, and they've brought the old classic Descendents tunes back to life full-strength!

Best Club: Maxwells

Jerk Of The Year: Brian Baker (Jerk of the Century!)

TONY RETTMAN

Top Ten Records - 1989

1. Haywire - Private Hell (New Beginning)
2. Gorilla Biscuits - Start Today (Revelation)
3. Bold - 7" EP (Revelation)
4. Chain Of Strength - True Till Death 7" (Rev.)
5. De La Soul - 3 Feet High & Rising (Tommy Boy)
6. Madonna - Like A Prayer (Sire)
7. Paula Abdul - Forever Your Girl (Virgin)
8. 3 - Dark Days Coming (Dischord)
9. Fugazi - Margin Walker (Dischord)
10. Alone In A Crowd - Alone In A Crowd 7" (Flex)

Best Club
Scott Palmucci's backyard

MICHELE TAYLOR

Top Ten Vinyl Of '89

1. White Zombie - Make Them Die Slowly
2. Prong - Force Fed
3. Skinny Puppy - Tin Omen 12"
4. Soundgarden - Louder Than Love
5. NWA - Straight Outta Compton
6. Surgery - EP
7. Kreator - Extreme Aggression
8. Big Daddy Kane - I Get The Job Done
9. Iron Works, Inc. - In Range (advance cassette)
10. Queen Latifah - All Hail The Queen

Band Of The Year: White Zombie

Best Club: Downtown/666 Broadway

Jerk Of The Year: Axl Rose

TOM ANGELLI

Top 10 Of 1989

1. Bad Religion - No Control (lp)
2. Buffalo Tom - Buffalo Tom (lp)
3. Doughboys - Home Again (lp)
4. Fugazi - Margin Walker (ep)
5. Nomeansno - Wrong (lp)
6. Operation Ivy - Energy (lp)
7. SNFU - Better Than A Stick... (lp)
8. Soulside - Bass (7" ep)
9. Soulside - Hot-Bodi Gram (lp)
10. Toasters - Thrill Me Up (lp)

Best Club - Maxwells

Best Band - Fugazi

JIM DeROGATIS

A Baker's Dozen From 1989

1. Boiled In Lead - From the Ladle To the Grave
2. Rhys Chatham - Die Donnergotter
3. Pere Ubu - Cloudland
4. Galaxie 500 - On Fire
5. Tie: Neil Young - Freedom
Various artists - The Bridge
6. 27 Various - Hi
7. Yo La Tengo - President Yo La Tengo
8. Tone Loc - Loc'ed After Dark
9. Miracle Workers - Primary Domain
10. Bob Mould - Workbook
11. Velvet Monkeys - Rotting Corpse A Go Go
12. Throwing Muses - Hunkpapa
13. Speed The Plough - Speed The Plough



KEN KATKIN

Top Ten Records

1. Death of Samantha - Come All Ye Faithless (Homestead)
2. The Frogs - It's Only Right & Natural (Homestead)
3. Vulgar Boatmen - You & Your Sister (ILA)
4. Fugazi - Margin Walker (Dischord)
5. Lisa Suckdog - Drugs Are Nice (Suckdog)
6. Killdozer - For Ladies Only (7"box) (Touch & Go)
7. King Kong - "Movie Star EP" (King Kong)
8. Mudhoney - "You Got It (Keep It Outta My Face)" 45 (Sub-Pop)
9. Slint - Tweeze (Jennifer Hartman)
10. Didjits - Lovesicle 7" (Touch & Go)

**JERSEY BEAT'S
RECORDS OF THE YEAR
1985 - 1989**

1984: The Trypes - "The Explorers Hold"

1985: The Windbreakers - Terminal

1986: Moving Targets - Burning In Water

1987: Dinosaur - You're Living All Over Me

1988: Sonic Youth - Daydream Nation

(Records picked by consensus among staff)

Top Ten Worst Parts Of Doing A Fanzine

1. Tuesday night gigs
2. Wednesday night gigs
3. Bands who invite you to a show specifically to see their band, and then don't put you on the guest list.
4. Bands that ask you to help them get gigs.
5. Trying to get an all-volunteer staff to understand the word "deadline"
6. The Post Office
7. Going to see your friend's new band, and they suck, then trying to tell him what you thought.
8. Bouncers, doormen, no-camera rules, and clubs that put bands on after 2 a.m.
9. Trying to figure out what to do with the 40 promo records that came in the mail last week.
10. Getting a 30-page presskit from a band you really like and then finding the big interview you did with them last issue isn't in it.

Top Ten Warning Signs of Bad Bands

1. Any band with more than 5 members
2. Costume changes
3. Bass players with beards in flannel shirts.
4. Spandex of any kind
5. Lead singer who opens with "How you all feeling tonight? Do you want to Rock And Roll?"
6. Led Zeppelin covers
7. Bass player has to tune the guitarist's guitar
8. Female lead singers who dress like Annie Hall
9. Male lead singers who dress like Annie Hall
10. Drum solos

- Jim Testa



JERSEY BEAT

Bruce Lee Gallanter's
Top 100 Vocal Releases
of 1989!!

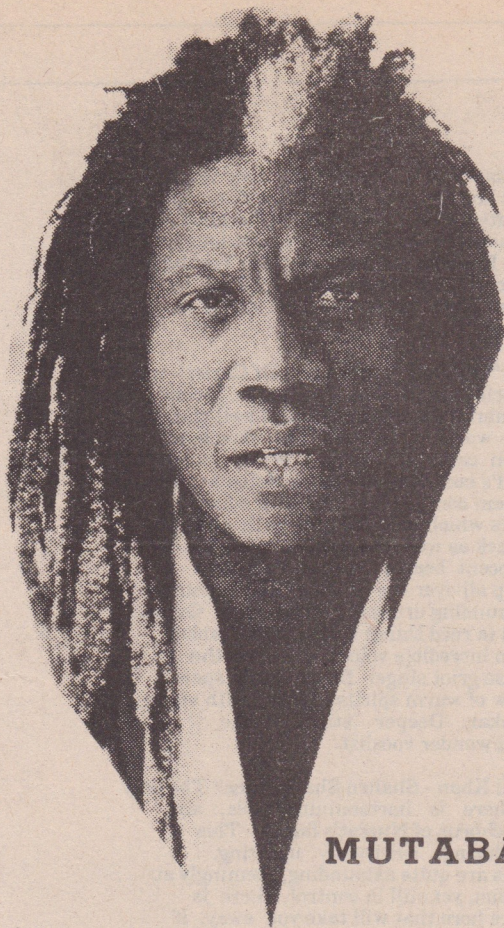
1. Bob Dylan-Oh Mercy
2. Neil Young-Freedom
3. John Hiatt-Slow Turning
4. Elvis Costello-Spike
5. Bruce Cockburn-Big Circumstance
6. Sonic Youth-Daydream Nation
7. Mudhoney-Superfuzz Bigmuff
8. Material-Seven Souls
9. Jean-Paul Sartre Exp.-Size of Food
10. Eleventh Dream Day-Beet
11. LOOP-Fade Out
12. Jali Musa Jawara-Soubindour
13. Butthole Surfers-Widowermaker
14. Nusrat Ali Fateh Khan-Shahen Shah
15. Rickey Lee Jones-Flying Cowboys
16. Daniel Lanois-Acadie
17. Exene Cervenka-Old Wives' Tales
18. Jane Siberry-Bound by the Glory
19. Loudon Wainwright III-Therapy
20. Bevis Frond-Through the Looking
21. Ritmia-Perhaps the Sea Glass
22. Rai Rebels-comp.
23. Baaba Maal-Djam Leeli
24. Ivo Papasav-Orpheus Ascending
25. Yo La Tengo-President Yo La Tengo
26. The Bridge-Neil Young comp.
27. LARD-The Power of Lard
28. Muzcikas-The Prisoner's Song
29. Horseflies-Human Fly
30. Salif Keita-Ko Yan
31. The Residents-The King & Eye
32. Wendy & Lisa-Fruit at the Bottom
33. Lou Reed-New York
34. Neville Bros.-Yellow Moon
35. Heidi Berry-Below the Waves
36. Steeleye Span-Tempted & Tried
37. Hugo Largo-Mettle
38. Robyn Hitchcock-Queen Elvis
39. Zani Diabate-Super Djata
40. Tabu Ley-Babeti Soukous
41. Milton Nascimento-Miltons
42. Eric Anderson-Ghost Upon the
43. Time Between-Byrds..Highway
44. Spacemen 3-Playing with Fire
45. Mary Margaret O'Hara-Ms. America
46. Bob Mould-Workbook
47. Bonnie Raitt-Nick of Time
48. Speed the Plough-1st
49. AC Marias-One of Our Girls
50. Grateful Dead-Built to Last
51. Beleaz Tropical-David Byrne Brazilian
52. Died Pretty-Lost comp.
53. The 27 Various-Yes, Indeed
54. Black Sun Ensemble-Lambent Flame
55. Joe Jackson-Blaze of Glory
56. Band of Holy Joy-What the Moon Saw
57. TAD-God's Balls
58. Dr. John-In a Sentimental Mood
59. Band of Susans-Love Agenda
60. Menace-Doghouse
61. George Clinton-The Cinderella Theory
62. Allen Ginsberg-The Lion
63. World of Pooh-Land of Thirst
64. Indigo Girls-st
65. Africa on Mango-comp.
66. Firehose-From Ohio
67. No Safety-The Lost Leg
68. Goebbels&Mueller-Man in the Elevator
69. Lyle Lovett & His Large Band
70. Shawn Colvin-Steady On
71. Srah Hickman-Equal Scary People
72. Syd Straw-Surprise
73. Sub Pop 200-comp.
74. Screaming Blue Messiahs-Totally
75. Maria Mckee-1st Religious
76. Jad Fair & Daniel Johnston
77. Youssou N'Dour-The Lion
78. The Fluid-Road Mouth
79. Mutabaruka-Any Which Way...Freedom
80. Bunny Wailer-Liberation
81. Leaving trains-Transportational D.Vice
82. Sarah McLaughlin-Touch
83. Map of the World-An Inch =1000 Miles
84. God's Little Monkeys-New Maps of Hell
85. Blue Rodeo-Diamond Mine
86. Steel Pole Bathtub-Butterfly Love
87. Hollow Heyday-Abandoned
88. Horny Genius-Burn Your Sister
89. Screaming Trees-Buzz Factory
90. 101 Crustaceans-Songs of Resignation
91. God Bullies-Mama Wombwomb
92. Nanci Griffith-Storms
93. SWANS-Burning World
94. Pete Townshend-The Iron Man
95. Tom Petty-Full Moon Fever
96. Graham Parker-Live Alone in America
97. Warren Zevon-Transverse City
98. Sam Mangwana-Aladji
99. Tin Machine-1st
100. De La Soul-Three Feet & Rising

During December of each year, I put together a Top 100 list of the best releases of that year, which I exchange with a few other vinyl/CD junkie cohorts. During 1989, a couple of trends became obvious - for the very first time, about half of my Top 100 are world beat ethno pop, a term coined by NJ's own Shanachie Records. Thanks to them, as well as a few other open-minded labels such as Real World, Earthworks, Mango, and Intuition, and with the help of such composers as Peter Gabriel, David Byrne, Paul Simon, and even the Ambitious Lovers frontline, many of us listeners are beginning to embrace pop music from around the world. This is a positive sign, since it is one of the few ways we learn to accept other cultures. Here follows brief descriptions/recommendations of my favorite such releases from last year.

Shanachie Records, based in Newton, NJ, gets stronger all the time. Known for its strong selection of reggae records over the years, they've expanded into world beat from Italy, India, Algeria, France, and South Africa, and even distribute a gospel label. Their best of 1989 includes:

1. Ritmia - Perhaps The Sea From Italy comes this elegant, mostly acoustic, purely melodic yet subtly progressive quartet. A wonderful combination of either two guitars or superbly toned soprano sax and clarinet. Accordion drones and a jawharp solo add surprises. Beautiful.
2. Cheb Mami - Price Of Rai Somewhat stripped down Algerian pop/lite funk, with nice dance grooves and passionate note-bending vocalizing throughout. The minimal instrumentation of violin, synth, elec. bass, and even cheesy drum machine works because the feel is just right, and Mimi's voice always pours it out.
3. Bunny Wailer - Liberation Nice return of the only surviving original Wailer, and not surprisingly unlike mid-period Bob Marley. The smooth, cool, and catchy tunes are most sincere in their lyric content of liberation, justice, and the sad situation in South Africa.
4. Mutabaruka - Any Which Way...Freedom The ever sharp-tongued Jamaican poet and sage is also back for a fourth strong effort. Rhythmic vocal jabs and diverse arrangements. Politically cool lyrics/poems on modern day slavery, and a bitter struggle for freedom.

Continued on next page



MUTABARUKA

a beginner's guide to
WORLD BEAT
by bruce gallanter



RITMIA

WORLD BEAT

Peter Gabriel has been a musical explorer for longer than most; he organizes the influential and important organization/festival WOMAD (World Of Music & Dance), which finally received its own spacious recording studio in England just last year. The results so far are five mostly fine releases in 1989 on Gabriel's own Real World label. The best of these include the following:

1. Passion Sources "The Last Temptation Of Christ" was one of the most fascinating movies I've seen in recent years, and Peter Gabriel's soundtrack was a well-chosen collaboration with world musicians. The double-lp soundtrack Passion came out first, a brave move considering Gabriel's current popularity. Going a step further, Gabriel them compiled an excellent collection of the world musics which inspired him, with excerpts from the soundtrack as well. Passion Sources has a soft, joyous, innocent beauty to it. Unknown instruments pop up all over the lp - haunting kanoun by Abdul El-Sayed, pounding drums by Fatale from Guinea, and cosmic rabala (a reed thing) with double tablas from the Nile. Two incredible voices appear on the lp as well - Senegalese griot singer Baaba Maal spews forth immense glow of warm spirits in a duo with violin master L. Shankar. Deeper still is the Pakistani/Qawwali wonder vocalist.

2. Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan - Shahan Shah Whoa!! The only instrumentation here is harmonium, tabla, and handclaps, with a chorus of Nusrat's family. This is totally trance inducing, spiritually uplifting. Nusrat's vocal feats are quite astounding, seemingly at the verge of explosion, yet still in control. There is an undeniable force here that will take you away, if you take the chance.

3. Tabu Ley - Babeti Soukous Mr. Ley's Africa International Orchestra is a smokin' 17-piece, 5 backup vocal unit that never lets up. From Zaire, they too have that infectious rhythmic grip that forces us mortals all to dance, not unlike the same energy that fuels King Sunny Ade. What really kills me are those propulsive, swirling, layered guitars and ever-pumping bass thing. Even the few slower/softer tunes have that sweet gospel, sincere feel. A great party atmosphere shines right on through this entire affair. Check it out!

Real World is distributed by Virgin, which has another cool world/pop label called Earthworks. They also released a few gems in '89:

1. Rai Rebels Another perfect compilation. If the aforementioned Cheb Mami is the price of Rai, these other six singers are monarchs as well. Rai is a hybrid music, similar to and influenced by rock, a mix of older and newer West Algerian musics. This comp is thoroughly exotic in feel, a loose haze-like structure, yet somewhat psychedelic in its weird mix of all strong singers and sailing, throbbing, caressing groove. A definite inspiration to the last Talking Heads lp. I'm hooked. Both Chaba Fadela and Zahouania have solo lp's out now on Mango, while Cheb Khaled also has one on Intuition. All are recommended.

The current Youssou N'Dour release, The Lion, sounds much more like a collaboration, a mix of both his and Gabriel's own sound...a mostly fine lp but we'll check it out in depth next time, along with a few other world beat collaborations.



SKENE! RECORDS

PO BOX 4522

ST. PAUL MN. 55104

1. Better Yet CT HC 7" EP - Both Pressings SOLD_OUT
2. CAUTION 7" EP with CRIMPSHINE/BONEYARD/A PRIORI 3.00 ppd.
3. AWAKE "Bellefs" 7" EP 4 songs 3.50 ppd.
4. CHOP CHOP 7" EP with BAD TRIP/ABOMB ANATION/VICIOUS BITE/PAYBACK/CONSTANT GRIEF - One Pressing SOLD_OUT
5. BEEF TRUST 4 Song 7" EP CT HC 3.50 ppd.

COMING SOON

6. From St. Paul...GNEISSMAKER/WALT MINK split 7" EP
7. NJ's DOG TIRED "We've got a bone to pick with the world" 4 Song 7" EP
8. New 4 Song 7" EP from NJ's STICKS AND STONES

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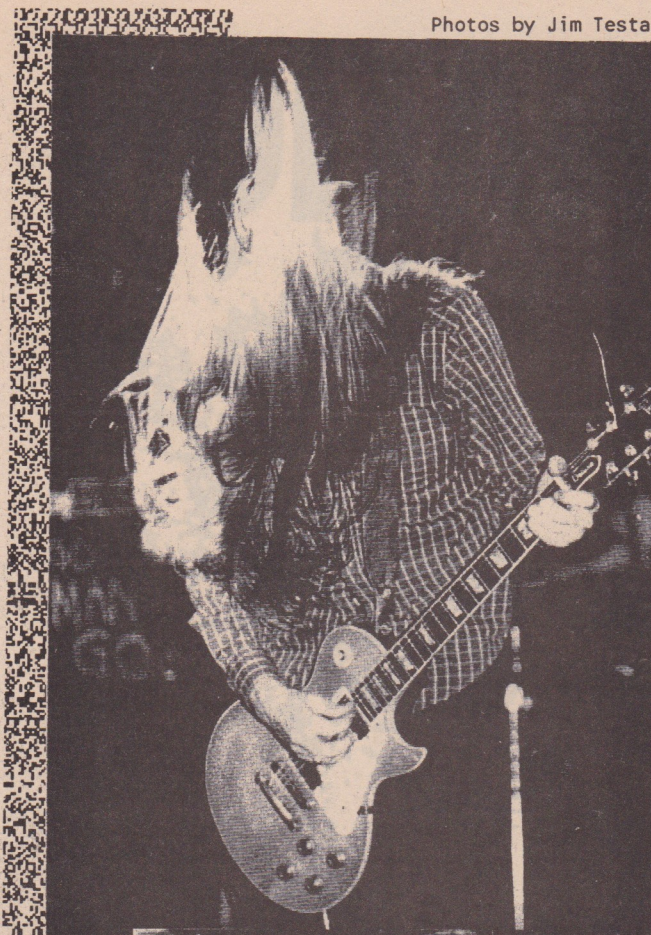
CAROLINE

east coast CAROLINE RECORDS, INC., 114 WEST 26th STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10001

west coast CAROLINE RECORDS CALIFORNIA, INC., 12410 FOOTHILL BLVD., UNIT B, SYLMAR, CA 91342

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Photos by Jim Testa



by Jim Testa

You want to know a band's worst nightmare? It's meeting up with The Guy Who Knew Them When... the wiseass with the long memory and a copy of their first demo, the creep who reviewed their first-ever gig... the guy who knew them before the NME and Melody Maker cover stories, before their hair grew in and their records got the rave reviews in every fanzine from Secaucus to Seattle.

I'm that guy. The band is Das Damen. And this is their story. A band that's almost there but isn't quite. A band in the middle.

We found them in their Hoboken rehearsal space, just back from their second European tour, with six weeks of crisscrossing America only a few days in front of them. These dudes were burnt out, dog tired, and dragging their tails. And then this. The nightmare. Lyle said it best. "This is the kind of interview you only get in New York. Like, 'You guys are great now but you used to really suck!'"

Ever hear their first demo, the one called "Too Hot For Hollywood?" God, it sucks. Wanna see the pictures of them with short hair and mod clothes? Here you go. A far cry from the gods of style and guitar thunder they are known as today, huh? But let them explain all this in their own words.

Ladies and gentlemen, the world's greatest rock 'n roll band... Lyle Hysen, drums; Jim Walters, guitar & Alex Totino, guitar and vocals; and David Motamed, bass... Das Damen.

Jim

Q: So tell me about this tour you just got home from?

Lyle: It was the usual American Band Goes To Europe kind of tour. Holland, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, and a week in England.

Alex: We started off in England for a week. As you know, you gotta play England, mostly for the press. But to our surprise, the gigs over there went over pretty well. We thought it was just gonna be critics and hip cats, but it was, you know, just a lot of kids turning out. The British turned out to be a lot friendlier than we anticipated.

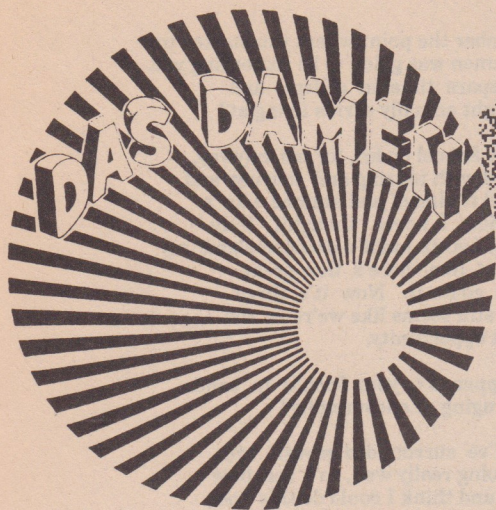
Q: Did people pretty much know who you were over there?

Lyle: Except for Italy. We toured last year and basically hit all the same places, and that was pretty much the groundbreaker. And even if they don't know who you are, the people there are just much more into going out to shows. It's not like we were in New York where every band plays.

DAS DAMEN

Lyle

Twentysomething



Alex: The audiences are really mixed. People just come out of the woodwork. You get your disco smoothies, you get your punk rockers, your studded metal people, then this new genre of SST and Sub-Pop people. Lots of guys like Mr. Logic, with slide rules in their pockets and stuff. And even girls, too. It's just such an...audience. Wow. It fills the places up. So before you know it, you're playing to a full house.

Q: Did you run into a lot of weird expectations from the Europeans, just based on your label or your reputation or whatever?

Lyle: More the first time we toured over there. For various reasons, people might have heard about us but not heard our records, so people would just come down expecting the usual SST thang. But then after we won them over with our charm, good looks, and great fashion sense, it was all right...

We did 36 shows in 40 days. So it was very hard. But I don't think we could do something like in the States. Because over there you get hotels every night, and other there we have a real crew, a driver and a sound guy. So we just have to play. And when you have to play 36 times in 40 days, you don't want to have to worry about much more than just playing. Only over there could you do something that nutty.

Q: I guess that didn't leave much time for sightseeing.

Lyle: Last tour, since we weren't the great kings yet or anything, it was like, oh, we're just Das Damen, we got a day off. So it was totally cool. We got to do a lot of sightseeing. This tour, the biggest sight I saw was Alex's nose. We didn't see anything. The photos from our tour are, everybody getting pissed, pictures of our crew, people in the dressing room, hotel room shots.

David: Yeah, what did we see in Italy?

Alex: Nothing. We didn't see any of Italy.

David: The inside of four different trattorias.

(Jim enters from making a phone call)

Alex: We were talking about Europe. Your impressions of the tour in five words or less --

Jim: Did they talk about the crew we had over there?



Photos by Jim Testa

Dave



Das Damen: Too Hot For Hollywood (1985)

Continued on next page



(1985)

DAS DAMEN

Lyle: Yeah, you couldn't have better people working for you.

Q: So how many days between these two tours do you have?

Jim: Six?

Lyle: I don't even think of it as between tours. It's just four days off. We got back from Europe, we had four days off, we have two gigs here, then we have Sunday off, then Monday night we have to be in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Q: So you guys have reached the point where you're earning a living from the band?

Everyone: (convulsive laughter)

Lyle: No, no. This summer everyone had day jobs and right now everyone is just eking by. I have no idea what we're going to make on this American tour. For all we know, we might be able to take a couple of days off for the holidays.

Jim: It's getting closer but we're still at a difficult point where it's hard.

A lot of people would classify that SST thing as pretty bad, they just classify it as "pot-smoking Grateful Dead hippy faggots." And we just have to go, no no no.

- Alex

Q: Can you remember the point where you started to think that Das Damen was going to be something you just did in your spare time in college, and something you might actually earn a living at?

Lyle: It was weird. School ended, for me anyway, and we were faced with touring and touring and more touring. And it kind of just seemed like a natural progression. I never thought, Holy Twentysomething, I gotta make a decision about my future. It was just like, here's this great opportunity, let's go for it. Now it's three years later and it still seems like we're in the midst of this great opportunity.

Q: Has what's happened to your friends in bands been more discouraging or encouraging?

Lyle: It's weird. I've surrounded myself with friends who are doing really well, so I see how well they're doing and think I could do this too. It's not like I've been hanging out with people whose bands are breaking up or falling by the wayside. It seems like most of the New York bands from our era are still slugging it out.

Q: From touring the country, have you ever looked around another city and said, we should live here, New York really sucks?

Alex: Yeah, I've said that. I think everyone's said that. Even in Europe, we all thought we'd be stoked if we could move to the Netherlands or something. And there are a lot of towns in America I'm enamored with. Like San Francisco, before it falls into the sea or something.

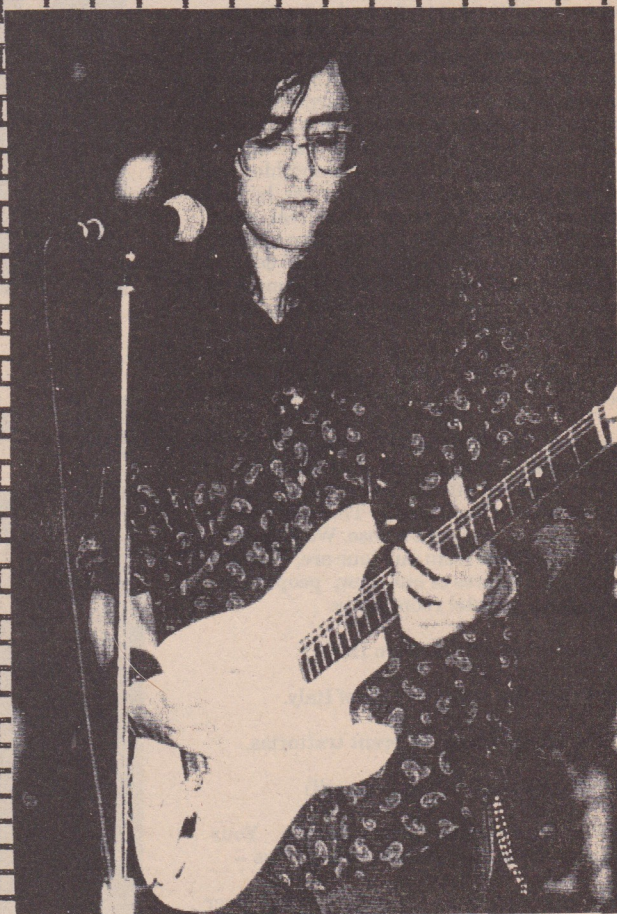


Photo by Jim Testa

Alex

Q: What are Das Damen's big cities? Places where you know you're always going to draw a good crowd?

Alex: I don't know... Boston, I guess, we always do well in.

Lyle: Minneapolis is okay.

Jim: Seattle is okay.

Lyle: There are only a couple of towns I don't like going to. We've played most towns at least three times so we usually know we'll always draw some crowd. If you said, okay you have to go back to Miami tomorrow, I wouldn't be too happy...

Jim: Parts of the south are hard, but they're usually hard for everybody.

Q: I would think with what you're doing, there'd be a natural kinship with what's going on in Seattle.

Lyle: I knew what was going on in Seattle, but we hadn't played there since our first EP, so when we went back, we were like, "wow, this is really amazing." It is definitely not the norm. Seattle is not what is going on in every town.

Q: Let's talk about the new record, Mousetrap. Was it already recorded before you signed with Twin/Tone?

Jim: Sort of in between labels.

Lyle: It wasn't like we actually shopped it around. It's not like Twin/Tone heard it and went, "My god, we could make millions! The deal just kind of developed while we were recording."

Q: What happened with the vocals on this one? You're all actually singing in key.

Alex: What we did was, we just changed keys. We went from Eastern, bizarre, mantra-like keys, to an easier, more accessible sound to western ears. The keys are still minor and made up, but it's more like, to western ears...

Lyle: Only in New York can you get an interview like this. We get fan mail like that too. "You guys are great now but you used to really SUCK!" Thank you, thanks a lot.

Q: Hey, it's not like I didn't like the earlier records, it just sounds different now.

Jim: It wasn't really planned that way, but it was just a sort of reflective, melancholy period that we were going through when we wrote it. It's not like we said, ok, let's slow it down, it just came about because a lot of weird stuff was going on.

Q: Are you totally disgusted with discussing Michael Jackson's influence on your career?

Lyle: Yes, totally.

Q: The bottom line (Jackson's lawyers threatened a suit over Das Damen's unauthorized use of "Magical Mystery Tour" on their "Marshmallow Conspiracy" ep) was that you lost a marginally selling record and got a million dollars worth of free publicity, no?

Continued on next page

Hair there and everywhere



Photo by Andy Peters



Lyle (1985)

Jim: No, not really. It was just starting to really sell when all this happened and it got pulled. (The record is still available, without the offending tune.)

Lyle: We were on tour in Europe when all this came out, so it definitely helped sell some records. But it was all really counter publicity, because now people just go, "oh, Das Damen, the band that almost got sued by Michael Jackson" instead of "those charming lads with great clothes." I'd much rather be known for something else.

Jim: It's a little embarrassing. I guess magazines like Spin or Rolling Stone that wouldn't write about us for any other reason picked up on that.

Lyle: Yeah, it was like, "Hardcore Band Das Damen Gets Sued By Michael Jackson." They didn't really get the point of the band.

Q: Do you still get a lot of the generic hardcore-band questions?

Lyle: No, that was more first-tour stuff.

Jim: Except in Europe. It's weird because over there some of them are just starting to wake up to what happened like, six, seven years ago here. So you get questions like, Minor Threat, weren't they great? And you go, yeah, they were...

Alex: And they say, Fugazi? You mean he had another band before that?

Lyle: Yeah, Wings.

Q: Now that you're beyond the hardcore thing, you're really one of those bands that nobody can label.

Lyle: We try our best.

Alex: Every great band is like that. Think of the Beatles. How could you put a label on them? One minute they had mustaches, the next minute they had beards. (laughter) No, serious, they just covered the whole gamut.

Lyle: I think with the new record we'll break down a lot of labels too.

Jim: A lot of people kinda go, oh, Das Damen, they have long hair and they play kinda loud and they're on SST, so there you go. No reason to listen to them 'cos you know what they sound like! So I think Twin/Tone is kinda cool but it doesn't have the same kind of stigma that SST has.

Alex: We think it will work to our advantage. A lot of people would classify that SST thing as pretty bad, they just classify it as "pot-smoking Grateful Dead hippy faggots." And we just have to go, no no no.

David: It still happens. We got booked at this pizzeria on Heavy Metal Night.

Q: Your record jackets don't give much clue to what you're up to either.

Lyle: It's really interesting. A review in one of the weeklies went "Hardcore to Sixties," and I think that was just based on looking at the record jackets, not listening to the records.

Q: Are you playing it out now?

Jim: We're trying.



It kind of just seemed like a natural progression. I never thought, Holy Twentysomething, I gotta make a decision about my future. It was just like, here's this great opportunity, let's go for it. Now it's three years later and it still seems like we're in the midst of this great opportunity.

-Lyle



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by Tom Angelli

The following is an interview with the two guitarists of Earth Pig. Before Earth Pig, both Phil and Art were in the short-lived Reminder (with yours truly on attempted bass).

Relatively new, this rock band (no grunge included) has been getting a lot of positive feedback and a lot of breaks - like their soon-to-be-released single on S.O.L. Records. Who could I compare them to? Maybe a cross between Buffalo Tom and a fuller, meatier-sounding Short Dogs Grow. Then again, maybe not...

Interview by Tom

Phil - guitar, nice jumps, and single

Art - guitar, nasty looks, and solo fiend

Q: How did you join Earth Pig? The other members were in a few other bands too, right?

Art: Phil and I were playing with Dave and John (drums/bass) in a goofy metal band that they had on the side. When they got rid of Steve (former Earth Pig guitarist) they asked Phil and I to join up. We said sure.

Phil: Me and Art were jamming with Dave and John on the side of Earth Pig. Just like a project kind of thing called Kodger. That really didn't turn into anything special.... John and Dave were in lots of bands together - Foe, Malignant Tumor, and Wasserman Love Puddle among them.

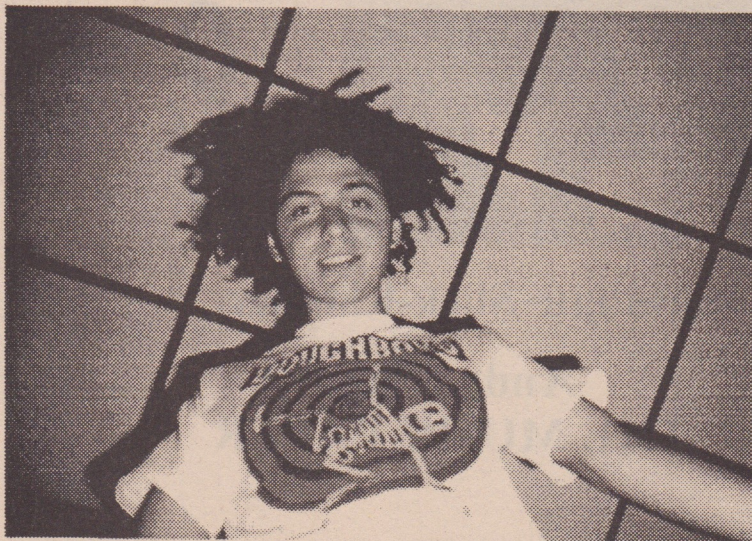
Q: What was the delay with the 12" EP? (Recorded with the original lineup). Do you like it?

Art: The delay was getting jackets printed. I hate it.
Phil: The artwork for the cover kept getting put aside. I liked the record at first but now I don't care for it. I think it's pretty boring. We have a totally different sound than that record. It's a lot better now in my opinion.

Q: What do you feel you've both brought to the band? Who are some of your influences?

Art: POWER! My influences are Die Kreuzen, Led Zep, and Donny & Marie.

Phil: I feel we brought a new sound, new ideas, and different musical directions. Some bands I listen to are Das Damen, Dinosaur Jr., Skunk, Doughboys, Nils, Big Drill Car, and Kiss.



Phil - 'Being shy and ugly doesn't help with girls'



Artie -

Q: Do you ever get any "heat" for being in a Rock band? Since so many bands seem to be recycling Rock (like the Sub-Pop bands, etc.)

Art: No, not really. People seem to think it's cool.

Phil: We seem to get some heat. Some people say we're "just rock," meaning that there's nothing to us or that we don't sound like Nirvana or Mudhoney... I don't even own a distortion box or a Big Muff pedal. I mean, John Lisa (of Jersey Beat) compared us to Stiff Little Fingers and the guy from TwinTone said we sounded like the Who, so you figure it out. That's why I hate being called "just rock" or "too rock." Fuck that.

Q: Is it hard for new bands to get noticed, since so many people don't give opening bands on a bill a chance?

Art: Yeah! But people eventually catch on.

Phil: It's hard to get people to check you out. People aren't gonna pay \$6 to see a band they never heard of. We were lucky, a lot of our friends or people we know got us our best exposure. Bill Ryan sold our records at Pier Platters, Steve Fallon is putting our 7" out, Das Damen got us a gig at CBGB with them, and we opened for Naked Raygun at Maxwells. Laurie Es let us play on her show on WFMU.

Q: Do you feel that the farther you go as a band and the more serious you become, the less you are becoming fans of others' music?

Art: No. I like all different kinds of music, and I still buy a lot of records.

Phil: No! In fact, the more serious I become the more bands I listen to. I'm always being influenced by the records I listen to. If I stopped, I probably wouldn't be able to write any more songs. I'm a fan of music. That's why I play.

Q: How did you get signed to S.O.L.? What's the deal?

Art: Steve Fallon approached me at Maxwells and asked me for our demo. I gave it to him and the rest is history. It should be out by March. Who knows...

Phil: The single will be two songs, "Sweet Chocolate" And "King Of Prussia."

Q: Anything else to add?

Phil: I have an EXTREMELY hard time getting girls. I guess being shy and ugly isn't a very good combination. I'd like to thank you and Jersey Beat and everyone who supported us and helped us out. If it wasn't for them, we wouldn't know what to do.

Earth Pig photos by Tom Angelli



by Jim Testa

At a small building near the corner of Rivington Street and Clinton, in a part of the Lower East Side where shopping is a way of life and the first language you're likely to hear is Spanish, New York hardcore is getting a second chance.

When CBGB cancelled its long-running Sunday hardcore matinees in November, 1989, for a lot of kids it meant the end of an era and the only chance they had to see their favorite kind of music. But within a few weeks, there were shows again. This time on Saturday afternoons. And this time, they weren't being run by a club, but by the people from the hardcore scene, for the kids in the hardcore scene. And the man behind them was Mike Bullshit.

As editor of Bullshit Monthly and lead singer of SFA and more currently GO!, Mike Bullshit has been a presence on the NY hardcore scene for years. He is a prepossessing kind of guy, standing over six foot tall with a scowl that would freeze Frankenstein in his tracks - quite a contrast from the serious, committed, peaceful person inside. If anybody can say anything about where New York hardcore is and where it's going in the 90's, it's Mike Bullshit. So we asked him. The interview was conducted on December 29 at ABC No Rio. Present were Jim Testa, Mike Bullshit, and Gavin from the band Absolution, who works the shows as security person.

Q: Let's start with the shows at ABC No Rio.

Mike: BSM Presents. They're \$3-\$5, they're three to four hardcore bands. No racist or sexist or anti-gay bands. We started doing them a couple of weeks ago (in December, '89), I hope to be doing them for a while. It's a cool club, there are no bouncers besides Gavin.

Gavin: I'm not a bouncer, I just write on the walls.

Q: Did you start the shows in response to CBGB cancelling their matinees?

MIKE BULLSHIT The Jersey Beat Interview

Mike: I'm sort of happy that CB's stopped doing them. 'Cos CB's actually gave you a scene and said, Here is your scene, and enjoy it but just don't do this, this, this, or this. And after awhile, everyone just took it for granted. And when you take it for granted, no one is going to work for the scene, nothing's going to happen, and basically it all turned into shit. So we're trying to make it not shit. Not make it, but work with people to make it better, to have a decent scene. Because there is no scene now... We're at the point now where there are New York bands who will not play New York because there's so much violence. That's silly, that's ridiculous.

Q: Plus there are so many bands from around the country who won't come to New York, because it's so hard to get a gig or because of the reputation for fights at shows.

Ready,

Steady,



PHOTOS COURTESY OF GO!



Mike: Well, Philly's worse. At shows in Philly, KKK show up and stuff. Here's there's a little clique with chips on their shoulders who like to show up and start fights. It's just not cool.

Q: I see you have Gavin and Tim (Boiling Point Fanzine) helping you, so there is sort of a coalition working on this.

Mike: It started out as just me, I was doing everything - security, booking, working the door. It just got to be too much. Gavin's helping me, making sure there's no fights. He's not working "security," he just makes sure there are no fights. Tim's going to be setting up a record table, where we'll sell hardcore 7" ep's for \$3. Buy them from bands for \$1.75 or \$2 and sell them cheaply, unlike some record stores..

Q: ...where they're \$4.29 or more.

Mike: Yeah. Most record stores in NY will buy 100 copies, save 50 copies to sell for \$20 in a year, and put the rest out...maybe. And that's not really cool. We want to give hardcore back to the kids. So Tim's getting in touch with the record labels and hopefully that will take place here too. It's coming along slowly but it's coming along pretty good, I think.

Q: In the last year or so, the whole scene seemed to get so fragments. You had these big labels starting up like Hawker and In-Effect drawing bands out of the scene, you had the straightedge kids breaking away into their own clique, and now you have bands like Warzone and Token Entry who write press releases saying they don't want to be considered "hardcore" anymore.

Mike: I'm not going to rag on people for what they want to do. SFA is probably going to go on a bigger label, but if I was still in SFA, they wouldn't be doing that... I personally would never go on a major label. I hate to say never because everything I've ever said I'd never do, I've wound up doing eventually. I like staying independent, I like doing 7 inches. I don't like doing albums. GO! will probably never have an album. GO! will almost definitely have another 7" after this one comes out in January. We're on Noo Yawk Rehkids, which is our own label. We'll probably be doing a Born Again 7" and I'm talking to a couple of other bands.



I like to stay independent. Stay with grassroots distribution. Nothing against bigger labels, but I don't like the concept of making money off of music. I don't think it's positive, I don't think it's something I'd want to be involved with. I want to have complete artistic control, I want to be there when they print the covers, and completely be in charge of distribution. I want to see the copies mailed out, I want to see everything being pressed. And I don't know if I'd trust a major label to do that. I would just want to do it myself. And so far I've done everything myself and it's come out pretty good. It could have been better. But it's definitely a learning experience. I think if the SFA and GO! records had been done by major labels, I wouldn't have learned as much. And I'm sure this next GO! 7" will be much better. And the one after that will be better than that one. So that's definitely the route I'm taking.

Q: Let's talk about GO! for a minute. Is the lineup on this new 7" the original members?

Mike: Pretty much. GO! started as a 3-piece. GO! started when I was hitchhiking actually (Mike hitchhiked across the country one summer) and I wrote a song that was a Lifesblood ripoff which was "It's Up To You." I just wrote that on the road, and I knew SFA (his then-current band) wouldn't do that song. So when I get back in March of '89, I was still undecided if I wanted to rejoin SFA or not. And in one day, actually, we just came to the realization that they wanted to do one thing and I wanted to do something different. And I was gonna do a demo tape playing all the instruments, actually, and Ronn said, You know, Mike, you really can't play drums. So Ronn said he'd play drums, and then we got Eric (guitar) pretty quickly. And then we did one show and got a bass player, John. And it's steamrolled. We've done a bunch of shows, we have a bunch of shows booked, we have a 7" coming out in under a year, which is pretty cool considering we took off two months. So it's really happening, I really enjoy it.

Q: You seem to make a habit of doing things that people say you can't do in New York. Like people say, you can't get booked in NY, you can't put out a record on your own anymore...

Mike: Well, as far as getting shows, CB's was ridiculous, because you had to go on a waiting list, you had to kiss Connie's ass... At ABC No Rio, I call up bands and say "You wanna play?" Or bands come up to me and say, "Gee, Mike, we're just starting out, can we get a show?" and I say, "Okay, how about such and such a date." It's a lot more relaxed. I'm trying to keep it to 3 bands instead of 4, just because it's a lot less headaches for me. I'll probably start doing four bands as more people get involved with it. My friends Charlie from Just Lies fanzine and Rich from Right Trash fanzine are helping me out a bit, and my roommate Sam from Evacuate Records is helping me out a bit.

As far as the label goes, Noo Yawk Rehkids is basically a label that supports the belief that people should take pride in their intrinsic value as a human being, regardless of their race, creed, sexual orientation, religion, etc. etc. I am trying to put out bands that are not racist. That are not Brooklyn this or Jackson Heights that... Not "Fuck the immigrants" or "Fag bash this" or "Bitch, whore, slut" that. Bands that take a little more time to write their lyrics, take a little more time think about what they're saying. I think that as a label it's starting to be kind of cohesive. We might put out this record by The Manacled, which is Rich and Charlie and a couple other people. And Born Against is definitely, as far as lyrically, graphically, idea-wise, one of the best put-together bands I've ever seen. If people went out and made the mistakes - and I've made mistakes, I've made mistakes plenty of times. But you do it and learn. Like the early Bullshit Monthlys sucked. And after they came out, I said, I did that wrong, and the next time they came out better. It's all about falling down and getting up and doing it better next time.

Q: Do you think there's more tolerance in the scene now, or less, than, say, five years ago?

Mike: I think five years ago people were a little more together. I think as far as "unity," there was more unity, because you'd have skins and punks and hardcores and rastas and the little kids at shows. And there wouldn't be as many fights at shows. There was more cameraderie. I don't think people were dressing up as much and had chips on their shoulders as much. I wouldn't call it "Unity" unity, but I think people knew each other more. It didn't matter as much what borough you were from. There are a lot of cool people now. And there were a lot of cool people then. It's really just two different times, and I don't want to dwell on either one.

Q: Have the ABC No Rio shows been pretty cool so far?

Mike: Yes. So far we haven't had a fight. We haven't had too many hassles at the door. Door prices have been \$2 to \$4. All the bands that've played have been cool - Citizens Arrest, Yuppicide, Buyout Society, Raw Shock, SFA, Go!.

Q: You're really dealing with the bands at the bottom level of the ladder. When you start booking bands from the bigger labels who are more well known, won't that necessarily start drawing a different crowd, kids who aren't really into the scene so much as hanging out at big shows? That's where the fights seem to start.

Mike: I'm starting to deal with some of those band. Uppercut is playing soon. Outburst, Maximum Penalty. There are some bands I won't deal with. There are some bands that really fucked me up in the past. Basically we're at the point now where we have 30 steady people every week. I'd like to get to the point where we have 50-60 people steady every week. I'm trying to get the word out, trying to get the people who will come every week and not be assholes.

Q: How's Bullshit Monthly going?

Mike: Bullshit Monthly is doing fine. #22 should be out late January. It'll be a quarter, it'll be 8 pages.

Q: How can you sell a fanzine for 25 cents?

Mike: (Runs down printing costs) Basically it costs me 20 cents to print one. And I get promo albums. So if I spend \$20 but I get 4 or 5 albums, I can deal with it. I'm not in this to make money.

Q: Doing the fanzine should complement having the club.

Mike: Pretty much. I can advertise the shows in the fanzine and sell the zine at shows. If people come down and read the zine, it's all right. If they don't want to come down, it's all right. I'm offering a matinee in New York where there's no fights, where there's cool people, where there's good bands for very little money. If people want to take advantage of that, cool.

Q: Have you ever had any problems with the Post Office over using the name Mike Bullshit or Bullshit Monthly?

Mike: I get so much mail addressed to Mike Bullshit or Bullshit Monthly, you have no idea. It's a lot of fun. I love the Post Office. It's great. I send out so much mail, I get so much mail. Bullshit Monthly gets letters to that name from all over the world and all over the country and I've never had any trouble.

Q: I recently sent a videotape to a pen pal in Chile, and it was intercepted by this "Committee For Political Correctness" and they watched the whole video to make sure there wasn't anything political on it before they'd release it to him.

Mike: That's scary. I think living in the United States basically makes you ignorant of stuff like that, and it gives you a big head because you can do anything you want, and it pretty much keeps you from realizing what censorship is.

Q: The last Bullshit Monthly had this thing about being "gay owned and operated."

Mike: That's been coming up a lot. People have been saying, it's a hardcore magazine, it has nothing to do with sexual orientation, why even bother putting that in? And it's because everything is heterosexual. You open a newspaper or a magazine and it's heterosexual, you just don't realize it. Sexual orientation should be the most inconsequential thing in your entire life. With everything going on in the world, like hunger, and homelessness, and wars, it's the dumbest thing to even talk about. And I wish I lived in a world where I didn't have to talk about it and it didn't matter. But as long as I live in a world where people are persecuted, where people are killed or beaten up or people are put in jail for the fact that they're gay, then yes, I'll stand here and say I'm gay and have no problem with it at all. And I'll wear the "Silence=Death" button as a memorial to the thousands killed in the concentration camps, to the thousands who are persecuted in the United States, and to the millions of people who wish they could wear that button and can't, because they would lose their jobs, lose their families, lose their homes, and lose everything...If there's injustice out there, I'm going to fight against it, and if I have to put myself on the line for it, it really doesn't bother me in the least.



Q: Do you think you could have come out 5 years ago and been in a band and everything?

Mike: I really wasn't out five years ago. I just came out about a year ago. And it's still a very difficult process and a very individual decision.

Q: Especially in the hardcore scene.

Mike: Oh, yeah. I've heard bands on the stage say "Faggot this" and "faggot that" and talk about gay bashing. And Bad Brains. Let's talk about the Bad Brains. On the new GO! 7" there's a song called "Holy Roller." It's not an anti-Rastafarian song, it could be about Jews or Catholics or Rastas or Buddhists or anyone who uses their religion as a fulcrum for persecuting a minority because of their sexual orientation, or a gender, such as women. I find the Bad Brains completely more offensive than the Cro Mags because the Cro Mags tell you that they're street tough and don't get in our way. Fine. Bad Brains come out saying "We're positive mental attitude" and "We talk for the youth," and they put down women and they put down gays. And it's just ridiculous.

People write me and tell me they're sorry the Bad Brains have these new beliefs. But the Bad Brains have spent the better part of a decade doing everything in their power to completely insult and defame gays and lesbians, and women. And it's just ridiculous that anyone still supports them. I didn't speak up about it until I heard the song "Don't Blow Bubbles" on the "Quickness" album. And I heard a song basically saying that AIDS is a cure for homosexuality and drug abuse, and how could anyone possibly give that a good review? And when I see a fanzine giving that a good review, I write to and say you should really read lyrics. If a person supports Skrewdriver, fine, because they can go to a store and see songs like "Nigger Nigger Out Out Out" and they can decide to either support this or not support this. This is America and you can make that choice. But a band like the Bad Brains, where they disguise it with this Jah bullshit and you don't know what garbage you're buying, and by supporting them, you're supporting all this bigoted, prejudiced nonsense, and you don't know it, that I think is wrong. I truthfully have nothing against warning labels. I'd like to see a warning label on that record saying "This record is anti-gay." As long as people don't censor. I'm not really a critical person, but I do consider myself a gay activist.

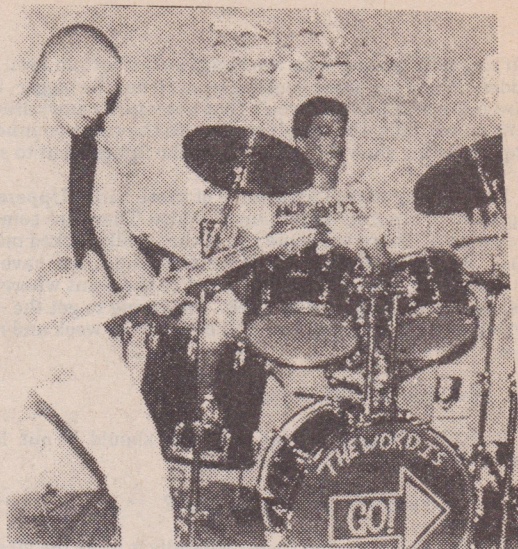
Q: That's great. And it must be especially hard in the scene you're in.

Mike: Yeah, it's hard. But when gay people grow up with no real positive role models... I don't consider myself a role model for anyone, but just being out there and being open and being out of the closet is important for gay people in general. And if there are just one or two people in the scene who are positively influenced by the fact that there's another gay man out there, the fact that there might be some physical threat against me is inconsequential.

Q: Anything else you want to say?

Mike: A GO! 7" should be out by the middle of January. The last time I was asked if I had any closing comments, I didn't, I'm not very good at that. But one thing I do want to say is, the thing is, we're Go! and you're not, but you can be if you want to be.

ABC No Rio is located at 156 Rivington Street, near the corner of Clinton Street, on Manhattan's Lower East Side. For directions, schedules of shows, bookings, or information about GO! or Bullshit Monthly, send a SASE to Mike Bullshit, 175 Fifth Ave. Apt. 2589, New York NY 10010.



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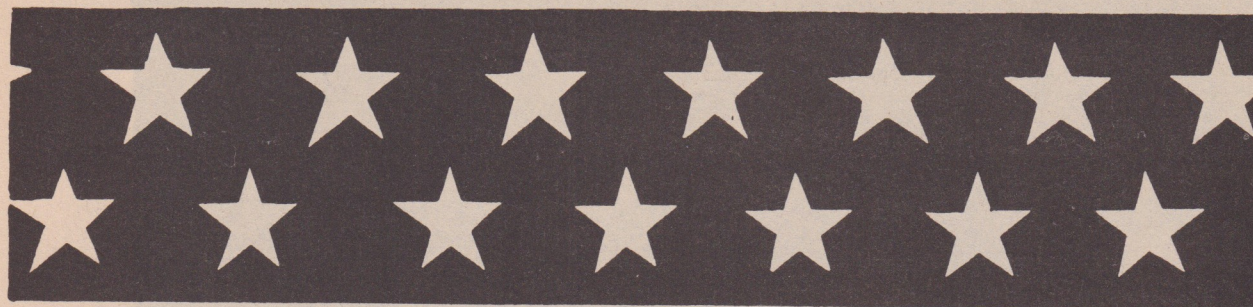
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Supertouch

The Jersey Beat Interview

Photos by Dave Run It

By Dave Run It

First there was Death Before Dishonor. Then there was Supertouch. Then their singer, Mark, met Dave Run It and did this interview. The rest is history.

Dave: Alright, who goes back to Death Before Dishonor?

Mark: Just me. Jon played some shows before it was Supertouch, but it wasn't really Death Before Dishonor.

Dave: I remember, in the summer of '86, you were thinking about the band but you didn't have the name Supertouch.

Mark: We were still using Death Before Dishonor, but it really wasn't DBD.

Dave: Your first show as Supertouch was at the Anthrax, wasn't it? I think it was in November or October, 1987...

Mark: Oh yeah, that was the one with Bold, or Sick Of It All... Was that '87 or '88?

Dave: '87, because the second time I saw you was January, '88. I remember that, because it was cold and my camera lens was fogging up.

[For the record, Supertouch, Sick Of It All, and Breakdown, Oct. 9, 1987.]

Mark: What did you think of the new songs?

Dave: Well, I hadn't seen you in over a year, I couldn't tell which were the new songs. The instrumental I remember you having for a while.

Mark: The second half of it - the first part we didn't have.

Dave: Supertouch sounds different from just about any other band coming from New York, which normally would be a problem, but now it's easier since you're part of the Schism/Revelation [Records] thing...

Mark: We are??

Dave: Well, you were on the compilation, those kids go to your shows...

Mark: Oh yeah, but I don't think any of our stuff sounds like Revelation music though.

Dave: No, I'm saying that it's really different, but still...

Mark: ...it attracts that crowd.
Dave: Yeah.

Mark: We don't have a set thing anymore, we don't try and sound like anything. When we first started - when it was just me and Biv and some other guys - we were like, alright, it's gonna be somewhat like a cross between Scream and Marginal Man, you know. Now we don't even think about it. All of our songs don't even sound like "us," you know what I mean - a lot of them are really different from each other.

Dave: Some of your earliest songs had what could be considered "mosh" parts - you don't really have those parts now.

Mark: Yeah, we did our funky dance parts.

Dave: I remember you used to have, like, this "chicken mosh," you keep your hands down by your sides and you pick your knees up real high... kinda like a strut.

Mark: I think I saw somebody else do it after me, so I stopped doing it. I'm not gonna say who stole it from me...

Dave: Come on, you can say it. Those kids don't read this.

Mark: I forget.

Dave: Probably Matt [of Bold]. You still have all those copies of "United Blood?"

Mark: Nah, I just have one.

Dave: Wait, you're full of it. You had, like, a dozen copies!

Mark: Nah, that was Ray or Porcell [of Youth Of Today].

Dave: No, you had a dozen copies!

Mark: No I don't! I've got just the one I originally got. The only record I have a lot of copies of is The Abused.

Dave: Yeah, I have 3 copies of that. Are they originals or the ones that came out later...you know, with the cheesey sleeves that are all folded over?

Mark: I guess I have two originals. The others are still originals, though. It's the same pressing.

Dave: What are some of your songs about?

Mark: Nothing, really. I just sing about me, whatever. We don't tackle any big subjects. I don't wanna preach to anyone, I'll just write a song about my friends, but it's not like other hardcore songs, not like a "fake friendship" song - "me and my brothers," whatever, you know.

Dave: What do you think of Scream now?

Mark: I still love 'em. They've always been my favorite band., since their first record. Their new drummer's great.

Continued on next page



Dave: I think he looks a little like O.P. Remember O.P., from Albany Style?

Mark: Yeah, he reminds me a little of him too.

Dave: He's [Scream's drummer] loud.

Mark: He's got a great foot.

Dave: That's one thing I was noticing - I'd be watching his hands thinking he was doing a tom fill but he wasn't - it was his kick pedal.

Mark: That guy, I think, is the best drummer in hardcore.

Dave: That's what they need, that's what their music needs. Bands that play fast, the drummer's just along for the ride, but when you slow it down the drums and bass really work more. It's more important to the sound.

Mark: Yeah, our drummer used to even hit the drums harder, but he stopped so he could get more intricate. Which is good, but I think he's saying he's wants to hit 'em a little harder after seeing Scream this weekend.

Dave: What's it look like as far as Supertouch getting vinyl out?

Mark: We recorded something we thought we were gonna make an ep out of.

Dave: Was that gonna be the split 12" with Breakdown or something?

Mark: No, who said that?

Dave: I think you did! Somebody told me you were gonna split an lp on Revelation with another one of those NYC bands that wasn't really straight edge.

Mark: We were never gonna split a record with anyone. Maybe Jordan wanted us to, he wanted to start a new label just to put us and Breakdown on it. Like, we weren't straight edge enough... we recorded an ep, but we didn't have the money to do it like we wanted to do it. We recorded 5 or 6 songs.

Dave: How long ago?

Mark: A couple of months [early 1989].

Dave: I thought you already had stuff in the can a while ago?

Mark: Nah. We definitely don't wanna put this stuff out, but we're giving it to record companies - like, we'll redo it if we get some money and a producer. I want somebody who'll hook us up with a video. Nothing soon, we're not gonna have a record out for a while, by the time we sign, record, and all that. But yeah, I'd be into doing a video.

Dave: I think the AF thing ["Anthem"] is kinda all right.

Mark: Haven't seen it. What's it like?

Dave: They filmed "Anthem" at CBGB, taking the sound off the album. It came out really good.

Mark: We might try to do a regular video (storyline) because every HC video you see, even a lot of the metal ones, it's just stagediving and stuff like that. I don't wanna have a typical video, you know - skateboarders, stage divers... We'd do it cool.

Dave: Would you use one of your slow songs?

Mark: It definitely wouldn't be a thrash song. We don't really even have any thrash songs.

Dave: What are some of the songs you have recorded?

Mark: "What Did We Learn," "How Do You Feel"... a lot of them don't even have titles. The majority of our set list, none of the songs are titled.

Dave: I've never seen you hang out a set list.

Mark: We just write, like, "Joe One," "New One," "Funky New One," "Other New One," "On Three"... like that. We call the new instrumental "Detectives" because somebody said something and somebody else goes, "What, 'Detectives?'" they heard them wrong, so we just call it that.

Dave: When you finally get into the studio for real, do you have an idea of the sound you want?

Mark: Like, what do you mean?

Dave: So it won't come out like the Underdog record.

Mark: They're a little more metal than us.

Dave: And that's the way their record comes off.

Mark: We're a little more rock 'n roll.

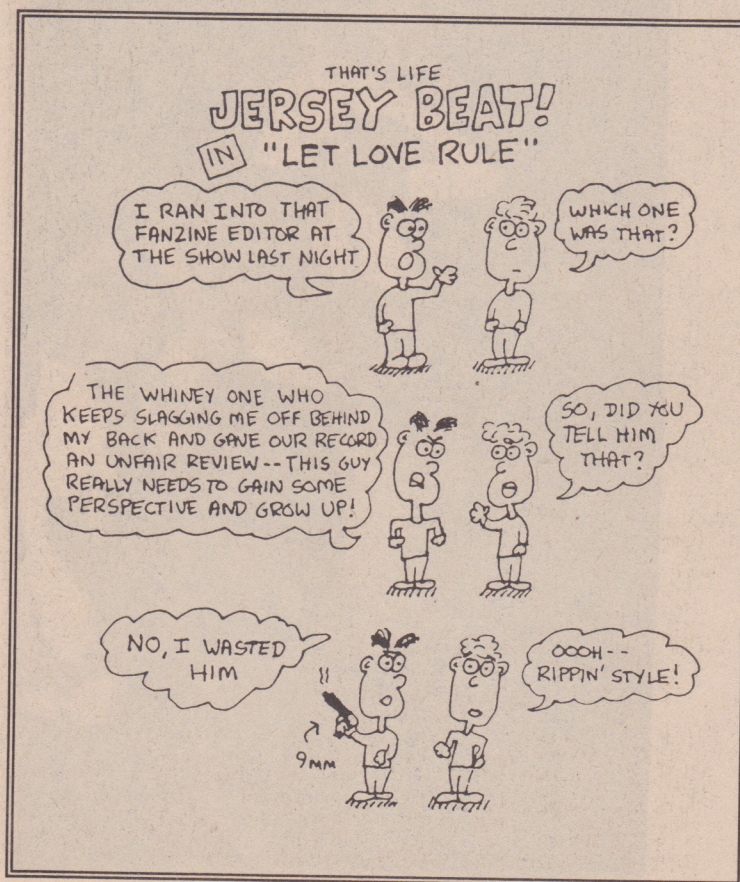
Dave: I like the Underdog record, it just reminds me of what I imagine a Leeway record sounds like.

Mark: I know what you mean... Underdog's one of my favorite bands.

Dave: What kind of music do you listen to?

Mark: I listen to all the HC I used to like. Scream and Bad Brains a lot, Marginal Man. I listen to a lot of Hendrix, Black Sabbath, a lot of Motown stuff too. Pink Floyd I listen to a lot now, the Who...

Dave: Alright, the Who rule.



Supertouch

Mark: The Who is our guitarist's favorite band, our bassist's too. Not our drummer though.

Dave: What's he listen to?

Mark: Hendrix, Scream, a lotta noise bands, actually, like Swans. I dunno, I never really listened to Swans and stuff.

Dave: I've never heard the Swans. I listen to stuff that other people would consider as being along the same lines, though.

Mark: You like Squirrel Bait, right?

Dave: Squirrel Bait rule. Scratch Acid...

Mark: This guy I used to work with plays drums for the Swans now. He gets like \$300 a week to rehearse every day. That's cool, y'know?

Dave: Would Supertouch ever tour? Like, before the record came out?

Mark: We were supposed to tour with Underdog last summer, but they had trouble setting it up. Doug Caron backed out, he was too busy setting up all those Revelation bands - Gorilla Biscuits, Judge, Bold. Johnny Stiff was gonna book it, and he was saying no one would touch Underdog, or something like that.

Dave: I guess that Disaster review hurt more than I thought.

Mark: I have no idea.

Dave: I might be because it took them so long to get the record out, plus they didn't fall in with the Revelation thing when they could've... They wanted to do their own thing. Richie's always had his own mind, though.

[Talk turns to Government Issue breaking up]

Mark: What's Tom Lyle gonna do?

Dave: I think he's gonna marry himself.

Mark: Or maybe his equipment. I heard he's always talking about his equipment.

Dave: When they played in New York with Dag Nasty, he had four Marshalls and two of 'em weren't even plugged in. He just wanted to piss off Brian Baker.

Mark: Do they hate that guy?

Dave: In a way, kinda everybody does...

Mark: Did you heard that Junkyard record yet?

Dave: It's the usual Skid Row/G'NR/Winger stuff.

Mark: It'd like Guns 'N Roses if they weren't racist.

Dave: They're just pigheaded kids from L.A. Like, nothing serious.

Mark: I like Jane's Addiction a lot. They're really good.

[Topic changes again]

Mark: Why is "Searching" on both Revelation compilations?

Continued on next page



Mark: We didn't know it was gonna be a whole different record. We recorded another song, one we had dropped, called "Inner Strength."

Dave: What happened to that? Does Revelation still have it?

Mark: No, we never gave it to them. I gave it to one person, Duane from Some Records, and I told him not to give it to anyone. But kids told me they have it on tape. I remember Underdog did a tape when Karl was in the band - Danny let [Duane] listen to it but wouldn't give him a copy. So Duane was taping it as he listened on his double cassette deck.

Dave: We could do a Schism interview and I could ask you if The Abused were hard.

Mark: The Abused had the best dance parts. Their best songs weren't even on that EP.

Dave: I could never get that demo. Dave Stein had it. I've got the 2nd Void lp, it's so bad.

[Talk of D.C. hardcore]

Mark: Artificial Peace is my favorite band on "Flex Your Head." Oh, and The Untouchables. [pause] Just kidding.

Dave: "I drink milk, I drink milk"

Mark: I like Red C too.

Dave: Wow. A couple of years ago Porcelly came up to me and said, "You know what band's really awesome on Flex Your Head?" I was thinking Void or Deadline or something, and he goes, "Red C." I thought he was kidding.

Mark: That 3 song on the [State Of The Union] compilation is really good.

Dave: I've got a cool 3 poster. They played Connecticut twice.

Mark: Where, some bar?

Dave: No, Anthrax and a dorm in Middletown. I saw Dinosaur there once. The fire alarm went off during their set and it took a couple of minutes before anyone knew.

Mark: I think once our album comes out, we'll play other places than just with hardcore bands. We've got a lot of rock stuff. We're getting better.

Dave: How's it been writing songs?

Mark: Smooth, smooth. It's fun. I look forward to each new song. We're not just writing each song the same way, like some other bands.

Supertouch!

Dave: Like Bold?

Mark: I don't know, their new songs are totally different from their old stuff. Some of it's influenced by Van Halen and Jane's Addiction.

Dave: Come on, you're kidding. Have you heard about Ray's new band, ummm, Shelter?

Mark: Yeah, they're recording.

Dave: There's a couple of guys from 76 in the band. Ray said they're like Fugazi... when I was talking to him, he was telling me about this song YoT used to do in '85 called "Poisoned Minds" and I didn't believe him because I couldn't remember it. Then I looked at some photos in Run It and there it was on the set list - "Poisoned Minds." I'm reserving judgment on his new band until I hear them.

Mark: Yeah.

Mark: (fake thoughtful) I think I'll write a song about that.



DIARY OF A ROCK CRITTER

a beginner's guide to clubland by jim testa

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14

Adrenalin O.D. - Maxwells: It'd been quite a while since I'd seen NJ's oldest and bestest hardcore band - long enough for all of them but new bass dude Wayne to grow their hair Das Damen-long and get signed to Restless. The band's live sound has completed the metamorphosis begun on the "Midget Western" ep and Bigfoot's UFO album, smoothing out the 125 mph thrasharama of their earlier years into tuneful '80's-from-'77 style punk rock. The changes put me off at first, but by the end of the set I was pogoing on the risers and happy I decided to go clubbing on a Thursday night. And you can't ask for much more than that. You'd think after 7 years (and a very meager local-gigging schedule) that A.O.D. would be able to draw a bigger crowd in Hoboken, though.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15

Buzzcocks - The New Ritz: Wow. The Berlin Wall falls in Europe and the Buzzcocks play New York, all in the same weekend. We live in wondrous times.

What to say? The band looked healthy, sounded strong, and seemed to be having lots of fun. The crowd loved it, even if the Lunkhead faction was at an unusually high 67% tonight. A capacity house at The Ritz is a Gig From Hell under the best circumstances - too many drunken fratjocks and their overdressed bimbo girlfriends elbowing you in the ribs, \$6.50 beers, and a sound system that couldn't find the Buzzcocks' patented lead buzzsaw guitars for the first third of the set. But I can't say I didn't enjoy it. They did most of Singles Going Steady and a few more obscure tunes, ending with "I Believe" transformed in a regular Arena Rock Anthem, the whole crowd singing along and pointing their fingers in the air, just like for the Stones at Shea: "There is no love in this world any-mo-ooooooooor." As an experiment in nostalgia, it was no more embarrassing than what the Ramones have been doing since around 1981, or what the Beach Boys have been getting away with for two decades. And let's face it, the Buzzcocks' lyrics are a whole lot hipper than "Help Me Rhonda."

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16

Spelvins, Helmet, The Ex, King Snake Roost, Das Damen - CBGB

Quite the bill. I caught the Spelvins' last two songs - romantic pop, a bit lighter and more tuneful than the Smiths, with a singer who's a dead ringer for Morrissey. Watch for them on the cover of Outweek, Helmet is the band guitarist Paige Hamilton quit Band Of Susans to start; predictably, the group is a showcase for his guitar, vocals, and presumably songwriting, all buried back in Bob Poss's wall-of-E Chord Susans sound. If good looks help a band get ahead, Helmet has a big headstart; besides the cute skinny rock dude look, they're



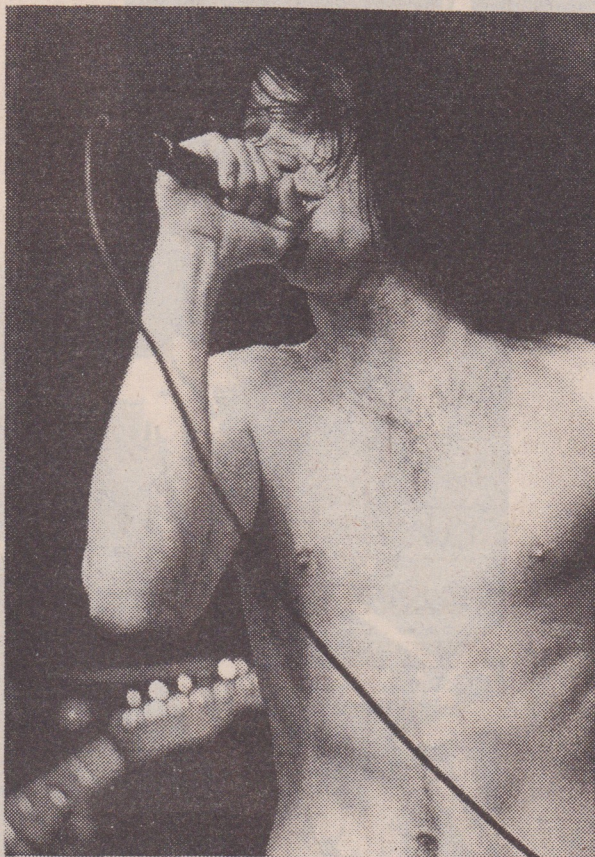
The EX

mostly about heavy churning double-guitar riffs, pounding bass, and lots of screaming, not exactly the most original angle in New York clubs these days. After about 4 songs, the p.a. blew up and they called it quits, so I'll reserve final judgment until I get another listen.

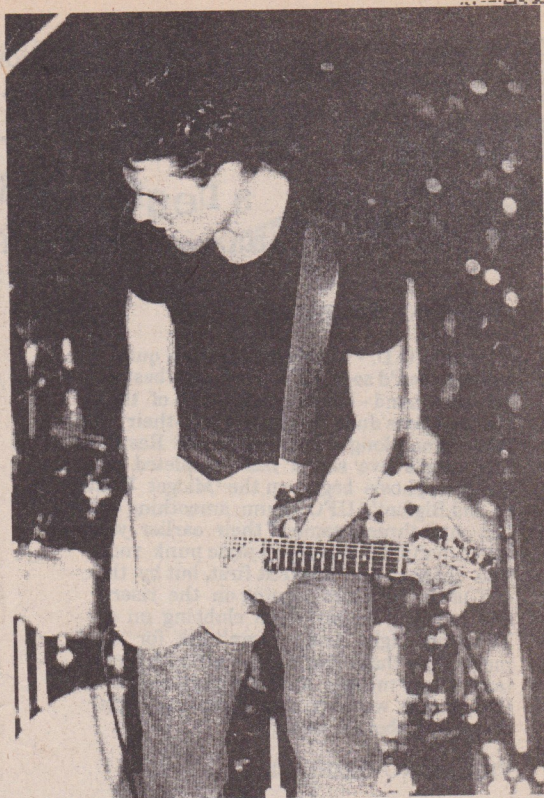
Amsterdam's The Ex parlayed lots of borrowed Sonic Youthisms (which they probably invented in Holland without ever knowing a Sonic Youth existed) like twisting a butterknife thru the guitar strings and banging on the bass pickups thru tons of stuff. They've got 3 double-lps out in this country, all worth checking out.

The less said about King Snake Roost the better. Loud, fast and heavy. Ok? I said it. The same audience that almost rioted when The Ex didn't get an encore almost booed these mooks off the stage, proving that, in the hands of one-dimensional palookas, noise annoys.

With a Das Damen interview and record review in this issue, I won't dwell on their set, their first in NYC for a while (March's Maxwells gig?). After 36 shows in a non-stop European tour, they were, quite naturally, tighter'n a pair of Bill Ryan's \$13 shoes, capable of both moving pathos and ear-bleeding mind-melting post-psychedelic mayhem.



Johnny Random/Swingin' Teens



Paige Hamilton/Helmet

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18

Swingin' Teens, Buffalo Tom - Pyramid Club: After reveling in the Swingin' Teens' first lp and interviewing for the last issue of Grot, I was anxious to finally catch them live - and this show was no disappointment. Singer Johnny Random's never gonna outlive the Igster comparisons (just look at him) but these Minneapolis garage punks are a lot more than Stooges clones - just raucous unbridled rock 'n roll fun, maybe a little more metal with the new guitarist but gobs of punk-rock energy & balls up there on the stage. Buffalo Tom - you know, The Band That Sounds Like Dinosaur Jr. - are gonna haveta work a lot harder to escape their pigeonhole. I like what they do, but it's been done - power trio playing sappy love songs under monster guitars. Even the vocals and the hooks have an unmistakable J.Mascis influence. One things' for sure - if I walked into a gin mill in Boulder, Colorado and saw these three guys on stage with no idea who they were, I'd still know they were from Boston. A few years ago, a band like this would've done their first lp for Homestead, toured for a year or so and gotten the Dino Jr. thing behind them, and then made a move to a bigger indie like SST. The problem with a young band like this starting with such wide exposure is that it's gonna make it that much harder for them to fuck up (a crucial part of the creative process, y'know) enough to reinvent their Dinosaurisms into something original.

DIARY OF A ROCK CRITTER

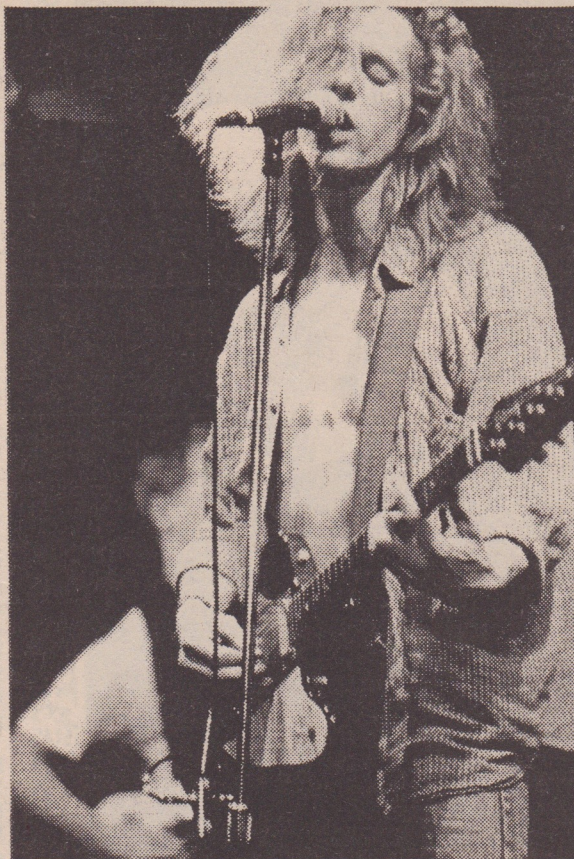
Tuesday, December 12:
 Crossfire Choir, Whirling Dervishes, Java Jel,
 Hellcats - CBGB

People often ask me, "How do bands get in Jersey Beat;" when what they mean, of course, is "How can my band get in Jersey Beat?" Here, then, is a true case history. The Hellcats' lead singer went to high school with a guy who works with me named Joe. Through Joe, the Hellcats first sent me their tape, then a video, then invited me to come see them. Most of the time, the band plays clubs with a 914 area code, but when they got this gig at CBGB, I ran out of excuses.

Briefly then, the night's events. Crossfire Choir have been around about six years and are still playing Tuesday night gigs; that should give you an idea of how good they are. (Note to Sonic Youth: Crossfire Choir signed to Geffen once too - for about 15 minutes.) The Whirling Dervishes are another local band with several lp's out, who have really been around too long for this sort of shitty gig. They're not bad, except for the lead singer, who fancies himself a sort of Gothic Dee Snider (and yes, that's as horrible as it sounds). Java Jel are one of those polite yuppie jazzy pop combos like the Special Guests (of "Paul Cezanne" fame), with songs about existentialism and Marilyn Monroe. At least they got a few of their friends to show up.

The Hellcats (who went on last - of course) surprised me. They're really good, even if they do look like something Nikki Sixx's cat dragged in - Hollywood sleazemetal transposed to the Lower East Side, they got the hair and the tattoos, and some good songs too. Hard, punchy Stooges/Dolls punk/metal. "Girl's Got Too Much" is their BIG song, the kind of killer tune a band like this needs to move up (remember what "Talk Dirty To Me" did for the very-similar Poison). The Hellcats'd probably be just as welcomed in L'Amours and the Cat Club as CBGB. I don't think they'll be playing Tuesday nights much longer, much less six years from now.

DIARY OF A ROCK CRITTER



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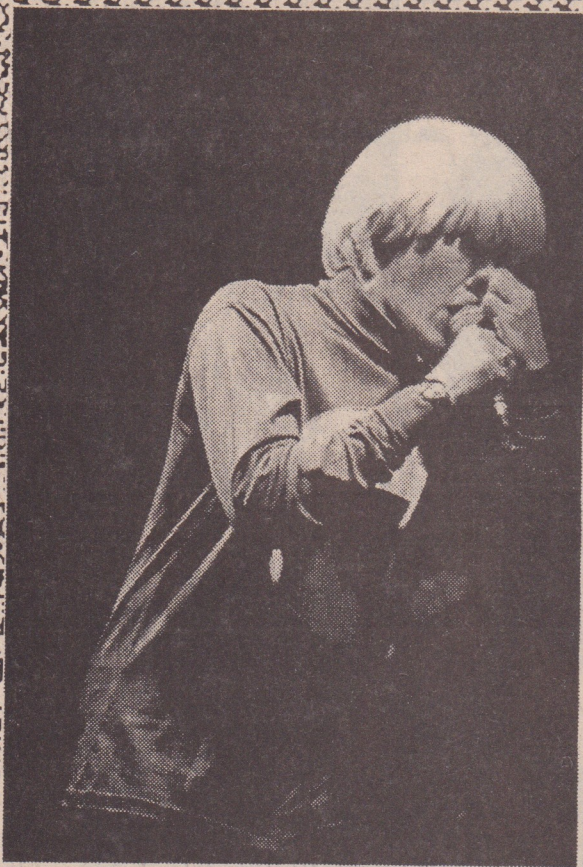
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Hagatha

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Tim & Bobby, together again

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9

Changing Bodies, Hagatha, Windbreakers, Tomboys, Astorians

Beware of bands that buy quarter-page ads in the Voice for 9:30 pm gigs at CBGB. Beware of bands with more than 5 members. Beware of bands with girlsingers who dress like Annie Hall. See, I make all these perfectly good rules for myself and then wind up ignoring them. Which is how I came to see Changing Bodies: sax, gtr, bass, drums, extraneous black female backup singer stuck way back of the stage, and Annie Hall. The whole band's dressed like a Lower East Side rummage sale. The club is empty (so much for qtr-page Voice ads.) Music is like jazzy funky lounge rock. Next stop: Bally Casino.

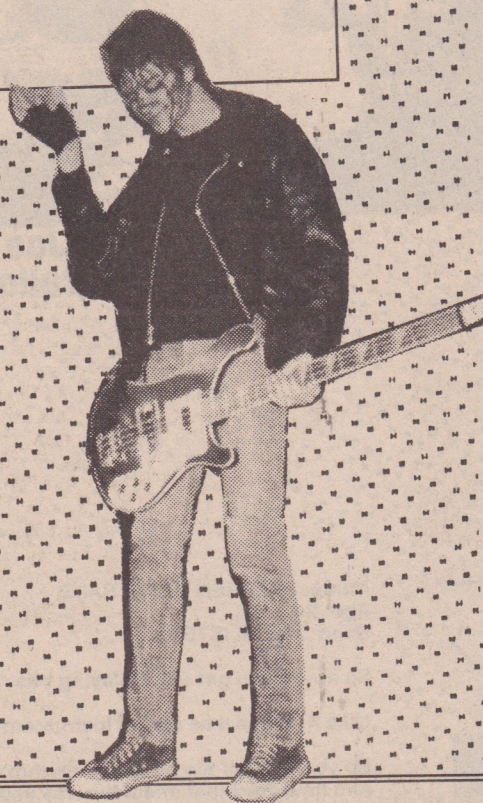
Next band up is Hagatha, whose publicist put me on the guestlist for this show and talked me into coming. Lots of turtlenecks on this crew. As promised, the lead singer looks like a young Andy Warhol. He sings like someone trained for the theater; in fact, the whole act's very theatrical, right down to the songs, kinda campy, frolicsome rock show tunes. I feel like I'm watching the NYU production of The Rocky Horror Show. Chick drummer has the Mo Tucker thing down flat, and the music is actually listenable, if you can imagine a college musical influenced by equal parts Lou Reed, Kurt Weil, and Meat Loaf. Give them two years, and the Warhol lookalike will be playing leads at the Charles Ludlam theater and the rest of the group will be in some hot new bands.

The Windbreakers - reuniting Tim Lee and Bobby Sutliff, tantamount in my mind to 1989's reunions of Mick and Keith, or the Buzzcocks - sound great, with Mark (Great Plains) Wyatt filling in the sound on keybs and the Lee/Sutliff combo fulfilling the promises Stamey/Holsapple made back in '81. Pure pop/rock ecstasy, and why these guys aren't MUCH better known is beyond me. If you missed them or their new record, you missed a lot.

The last time I saw the Tomboys it was 1986, at another of these awful late-night CBGB 6-band marathons. Only that time, the last band of the evening was scheduled to be Squirrel Bait, and the Tomboys preceded them. Unfortunately, this all-girl heavy metal quartet (Tim Lee called them "an orgy of hair and spandex") sucks, and back in '86 they had to play in front of a group of unbelievably hip scenesters, all of whom were tired, impatient, and more than a little drunk, and extremely rude. Pretty soon the whole front of the club was chanting "Bait! Bait! Bait!" and the Tomboys left the stage in tears. They fared a little better this time although they still make me wonder why shitty bands stick around forever and the good ones never last... I do give them credit, though. If I had come to New York for my first big gig and got heckled by Thurston Moore, I would've bolted back to Baltimore and enrolled in beauty school the next day.

I had been meaning to see the Astorians for years, and they've probably spent \$17 in postcards and stamps by keeping me on their mailing list all that time, so I felt duty-bound to stick around for their set. I only hope that next time I get to see them, it'll be before 2 a.m. Still, they are very good; lean, energetic NYC pop/rock combo with that rootsy country thing going in their songs, kinda like the Brandos without the pomp and pompadours. Definitely one of the better veteran club bands around, so check them out.

The Bass Player Poll: Things That Go Thump In The Night



Last issue, we did a piece in which we asked the drummers of some of our favorite bands to step out from behind their kits and tell us about themselves. It got such a good reponse that this issue we thought we'd do the same thing for some bass players.

If you think playing the drums is hard, try imagine being the bass player. They don't get any respect at all. Bass is usually dismissed as "the easiest instrument," and the stereotype of the bassist is usually the guy who owns the van, or whose mom lets you practice in her basement.

Nothing, of course, could be further from the truth (well...sometimes), as this collection of short interviews with the big bottoms of punk rock will prove.

Name: BOB STRETE
Band(s): Mod Fun, Poison Meat, CROCODILE SHOP

So how'd you get stuck playing the bass?

When I first started playing the bass, I was a Kiss freak. I thought Gene Simmons was God (and he WAS). So I wanted to be like him. Me and Mick (London) both decided at the same time that we wanted to start to play REAL guitars - we both wanted to play the bass. He got stuck playing guitar. I wonder if he's still secretly mad?

Do you think of the bass as primarily a rhythmic or melodic instrument?

For the kind of stuff (Crocodile Shop) is doing now, the bass is more a melodic instrument. You know, like I play riffs that work around the keyboards, which are more or less rhythm. But there are a couple of songs where the bass part is kinda rhythmic and steady.

Do you agree with the stereotype that bass is the "easiest instrument?"

Yes, it's right up there with the cowbell and the triangle.

If there's anything you ever wanted to tell the world about your bass or equipment, here's your chance.

First off, the price of bass strings is a rip off. I play a Rickenbacker 4001, and I use distortion, echo, and chorus. So I can get some pretty "in there" sounds.

Can you remember the first song you ever heard where the bass seemed like the most important instrument?

I can't pick out any particular songs except for "Apathy" by 1000 Homo DJs. But I think all songs by Joy Division and Bauhaus have crucial bass lines (my fave bands). I'd say they're my biggest influences. I think Peter Hook is the reason I use effects. Also, Graham Lewis of Wire comes up with some great sounds. I want to eventually get into fretless and 5 string basses, unless someone invents something better!



Name: JOE MERKLEE
Age: 27
Band: BALLOON SQUAD

So how'd you get stuck playing the bass?

When I was 16, my big brother said "Hey, Joe, you'd make a great rock star."
I said, "I don't play anything."
He said, "Learn the bass, it's easy."
I said, "Okay."

Do you think of the drums as primarily a rhythm instrument (like the drums) or a melody instrument (like the guitar)?

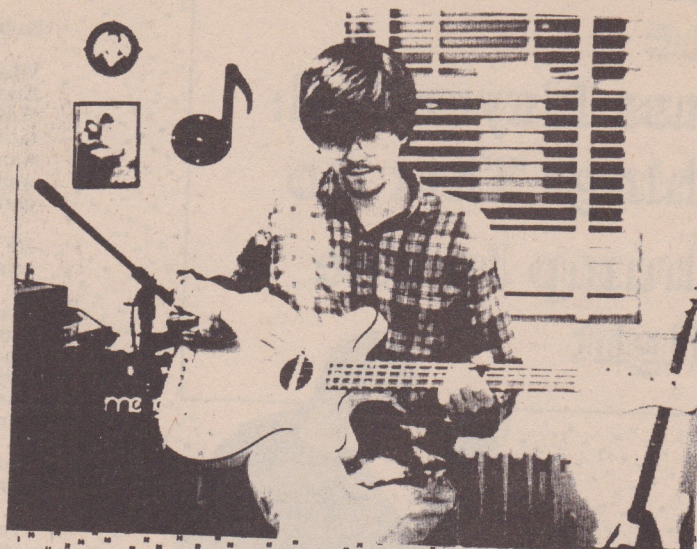
Both. It's definitely a rhythm instrument, working with the drums to form the songs' foundations, but that shouldn't keep you from being melodic, playing off other things that are going on within the song. You alter your playing according to the needs of the song. Maybe one song will be real basic, another much more involved.

Do you agree with the stereotype that bass is the "easiest" instrument?

Yes. You can get by as a decent bass player without being a spectacular musician. The flipside of that is that you can make it as involved and creative as you care to.

Can you remember the first songs you heard where the bass seemed to be the most important instrument?

The Beatles' "Your Mother Should Know" and Led Zeppelin's "Dazed & Confused," the first and second songs I ever learned. Biggest bass-playing influences would have to be Dennis Cowan, Klaus Voorman, John Entwistle, Chris Hillman, and Colin Moulding.



Joe Merkle
Balloon Squad



Steve Bahr
The Blisters

Name: STEPHEN (NITTI) BAHR
Age: 24
Band: THE BLISTERS

So how'd you get stuck playing bass?

I like it, chose it as my 1st instrument - next to vocals.

Do you think of the bass as a rhythm or a melody instrument?
And how does that effect the way you play in your band?

We use it as a rhythm instrument in our song format. Although the bass has the ability to carry adequate melodies for a rock 'n roll song. I write what I can play while at the same time being able to sing lead vocals and perform live simultaneously. Sometimes I'm forced to limit myself, but it's worth it most of the time.

What do you think of the stereotype of the bass being the "easiest" instrument?

It's false. The bongos are easier but that instrument wouldn't sound good in The Blisters.

Brag to the world about the cool stuff you get to use when you play.

I use a Fender P. bass. I'd like to try an 8 string bass sometime so that if Dennis goes on lead solos, the bottom won't fall out of the mix. It would be very helpful for live performances.

Can you remember the first song you heard where the bass was the most important instrument? Have you been influenced by other musicians?

"Mystery Achievement" by The Pretenders, "Gigantic" by The Pixies is great also. I like Graham Maby (Joe Jackson Band)

Name: BRIAN CAMPBELL
Age: 22
Band: ELECTRIC LOVE MUFFIN

So how did you get stuck playing the bass?

My brother played drums and my friend played guitar so there wasn't anything left to play.

Do you think of the bass primarily as a rhythm instrument (like drums) or a melody instrument?

For me, it's both. I try and feel each part for what it needs. For instance, if the band is playing something heavier, I try and keep the rhythm, and if it's lighter and poppier, I will try and work out some kind of melody.

Do you think the stereotype that the bass is the easiest instrument is true?

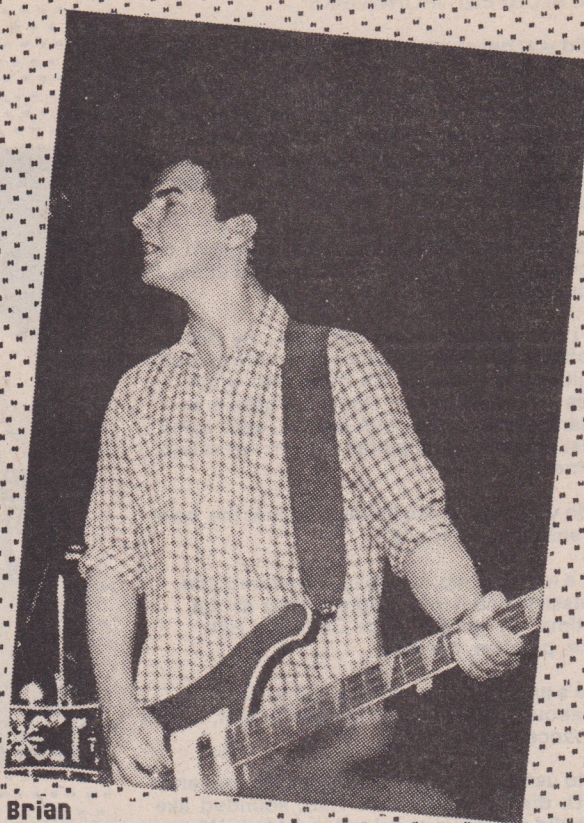
No. If you're conscious of rhythm and melody, there is a lot you can do if you want to.

If there's anything you always wanted to tell the world about your equipment, here's your chance.

I just blew my collective load on a new amp and bass (Spector NS-2 bass), and the amp is a combination of speaker cabinets and head.

Do you remember the first song you ever heard where the bass was the most important instrument?

Any later Beatles song. I try and pick bits and pieces up from everything. I've got big ears.



Brian
Electric Love Muffin

CROCODILE SHOP

Michael Hale and Bob Strete

Sweet

7-inch EP on Susstones

Measure By Measure



Name: JON MENT
Bands: SLUGFEST, IRONWORKS

How did you get stuck playing the bass?

Some friends had been guitarheads jamming for some time. I said if they got a band together, I would like to sing. They said "ok, you can sing - but you have to play bass too." My first bass was a borrowed student-size with 2 strings. They said that would be ok.

Do you think of the bass primarily as a rhythm or a melody instrument? And how does that affect the way you play?

Since I sing as well as play the bass, my bass parts often echo the vocal melody. I write on both the guitar and bass, so the bass part often doubles that of the guitar. I think the bass is an important part of the rhythm section, esp. since Slugfest has no rhythm guitar. But I'm not afraid to get melodic.

What do you think of the stereotype that the bass is the "easiest instrument"?

That's a load of crap, but so is the stereotype that bassists find it impossible to sing at the same time. It's like getting to Carnegie Hall - practice, practice, practice.

If there's anything you ever wanted to tell the world about your instrument or equipment, here's your chance to brag.

I used to use guitar effects. A D.O.D. Flanger and a D.U.D. distortion. My Boss HMZ sounded like shit, so did overdrive pedals of any kind. When the flanger broke, I used the distortion more until last summer, when I blew up my Peavy TNT 130. Play clean! It's not worth the hassle!

Do you play the guitar or any other instrument? And do you write songs, and if so, on what instrument?

I play poker, harmonica, guitar, bass, and sing. I write a lot of my own bass parts but I'm always open to suggestions. Some of my favorite bass runs or parts were suggested by the drummer or the guitarist. They are also open to my suggestions as to what to do on their instruments. I feel that a really fine band writes songs together - not all of the time but at least once in a while.



BRYAN DAVIS



Jon
Slugfest

Photo by Michele Taylor

Name: SCOTT BILBREY
Age: 21
Band: AMERICAN STANDARD

Since guitar has always been the glamour instrument of rock 'n roll, how'd you get stuck playing the bass?

I guess I love the spotlight, because I learned the guitar long before I picked up a bass. But then I had a revelation and decided I wanted to rock the thunder waves of bass. (Actually I surrendered guitar for bass because American Standard couldn't find a bass player)

Do you think of the bass as primarily a rhythm instrument (like the drums) or a melody instrument (like guitar)?

Bass is really both a rhythm and melody instrument, and if you play it as one or the other, you're not playing it to its fullest potential. I always try to write bass lines that groove well with the drums AND complement the guitar melody. The best thing about bass is that it fills the middle ground between guitar and drums, so it's really a part of both.

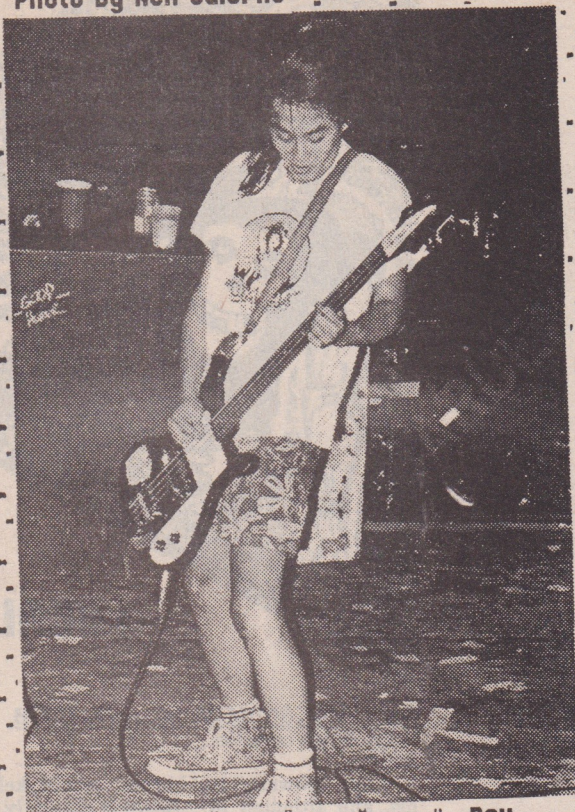
Tell us about your bass, the strings, the amp, anything you want to brag about.

My pride & joy is a '72 Fender Jazz with EMG pickups. I also have an early '80's Precision with active Seymour Duncan pickups that I play occasionally. I use a Gallien Kruger 400RB head with two 15" EV speakers. I only use GHS Boomer strings.

Can you remember the first song you heard where the bass seemed to be the most important instrument? Have you been influenced by other musicians?

The Rites Of Spring album totally opened my eyes to how much bass can rock, although my style isn't very similar to Mike Fellows'. I would say Geezer Butler mostly influences the way I play.

Photo by Ken Salerno



Ray
Hard Ons

Photo by Ken Salerno



Scott
American Standard

Name: RAY
Age: 24
Band: HARD-ONS

Guitar has always been the glamour instrument of rock 'n roll...so how'd you get stuck playing the bass?

All my heroes were bass players. Basses are cool. Guitars are ugly. I wanted to be like Gene Simmons and Dee Dee Ramone.

Do you think of the bass as primarily a rhythm or a melodic instrument? And how does that effect the way you play?

The bass is a rhythm instrument, a solid platform for the guitar and singing to go on. I like to write heavy songs with heavy riffs. It's hard for a bass player to write too many melodic things unless they can play guitar too! I can't. I've written a few melodic songs for the Hard-Ons. I hope to write more in the future.

Do you think the stereotype of bass being the "easiest instrument to play" is true?

It's underrated because unlike guitars, bass and drums must stay very tight - which is hard.

Tell us all about your equipment.

I use a Mono Rickenbacker with RB800 Gallien-Krueger amp and two Marshall 12" quads, Rotosound strings, and also an overdrive pedal to do solos. I would like a Flying V bass one day, or a Mosrite.

Do you play guitar, or any other instruments? And do you write your own parts, or have them suggested by the songwriter?

I don't play guitar or any other instrument. I'd like to concentrate on bass. I do write songs for the Hard-Ons and for songs written by other guys in the band, I make up twiddly bass bits for them, which is always fun to do.

The bass is a very overlooked instrument. With young bands, I think, it's easier to sound good on a guitar than bass - you have no place to hide with a bass, no distortion pedal or fancy leads. You have to be tight, or it comes across badly.

Can you remember the first song you ever heard where the bass seemed to be the most important thing in the world?

Most early Black Sabbath has great bass. I listen to the bass in these songs, which really stands out. Very distinctive and dominant. My favourite bass players are Andrew (Rollins Band), Darryl (Bad Brains), Phil Lynott (Thin Lizzy). The bass players who influenced me the most are DeeDee Ramone, Terry Butler (Black Sabbath), Dave Alexander (Stooges), and Greg Petroski (Straitjackets).

SMITHEREENS
 Smithereens 11, lp
 Capitol

One of the nicest surprises of the '80's, at least in terms of what happened in the local club scene, was the belated success of the Smithereens. Name another band that's been so embraced by college radio and MTV and so totally unhip. But beards, receding hairlines, and beer guts or not, here they are again with another hit AOR lp, full of beautifully crafted vintage popcraft.

If there's a secret to the Smithereens' sound, it may be that they don't have one; they're master chameleons, changing shape and color to fit the song, borrowing the best of three decades of rock 'n' roll. Don't forget, these guys are not overnight sensations; they spent about six years doing Beatles and Beach Boys covers at the Dirt Club and Court Tavern before a record company would take them seriously. It's something they rarely discuss in their interviews, but the 'reens have paid a LOT of dues, and their reward is an encyclopedic knowledge of pop that they put to excellent use.

On Smithereens 11 (a pun on the Frank Sinatra "Rat Pack" flick, "Oceans 11" - a joke their college-age audience will never get), the songs are a bit more upbeat than on previous records, although there's still a melancholy streak that perfectly echoes Imperial Bedroom-era Elvis Costello on "Blue Period" and "Cut Flowers." I prefer the puckish, Nick Loweish pop of "Yesterday's Girl" or the Beach Boys' harmonies of "Baby Be Good," and I love the way Jim Babjak's guitar gently weeps ala George Harrison on "Kiss Your Tears Away." Ed Stasium's production has a big, warm sound, embracing these timeless pop tunes that'll sound as good in 2000 as they do in 1990.

There's something to be said for sticking around long enough to get it right. I couldn't be happier that the Smithereens finally got their chance.

- Jim Testa

FLAG OF DEMOCRACY
 '23' lp

Buy Our Records

You gotta love F.O.D. 23 records and not a sour note on any of 'em! Actually, this is about their 2nd major release on NJ's finest label and F.O.D. haven't changed a bit. They've stuck right by their strict hardcore roots and provided us with a killer thrashathon if ever there was one. But this is far from the metallic thrash done by bands like Slayer, Kreator, or even Agnostic Front. F.O.D. play old style thrash with raw, screaming vocals. They don't sound like they've progressed much since earlier days but that's ok 'cause they're still a great load of fun. Wild frenetic guitars are as powerful as always and they seem to still be writing songs with many tempo changes in them. Lyrics vary, too, although most are in a silly vein. A much needed return to the core of what is now being considered immature. Good stuff.

- John Lisa

HELLCATS

"No Sympathy," EP

PO Box 174, Jeffersonville, NY 12748

The Hellcats are a 4-piece blues-influenced commercial heavy metal band from NY state. Their roots date back to 15 years ago when Del Thomas (drums & vocs) and H.Killer (lead gtr, vocs) started jamming in a basement as Sixth Graders. My first impression of these guys, via their promo photo, was "Oh no, not another long hair and leather heavy metal band!" But some of this is ok. The single, "The Girl's Got Too Much," is your basic uptempo rocker, and the best cut. "Nuthin' Special" is a bit reminiscent of Guns 'N Roses, but it's got that hi-pitched screechy metal-type voice that I hate. Technically proficient, polished yet still with raunch, listenable but it won't make a total metal convert outta me.

- Tom Brebric



LOCAL BANDS

NEW YORK SCUM ROCK Live At CBGB,
 Compilation cassette
 ROIR

Andy Schwartz had his era, now Mykel Board has his, and although Mr. Board is currently in Japan devaluing the yen and cornering the market on Rapeman comic books, "New York Scum Rock" is very definitely his tape. Compiled from the 1989 "Scum Fest" - a wild 3-night melee held annually at CBGB, the home of punk rock, and featuring the cream of NYC's "scum rock" scene - the tape not only captures this very groovy and vibrant rock 'n roll scene, but is filled with witty moments that are pure Mykel Board.

For instance, Letch Patrol have long been the gods of the NY scum rock scene, except that they rarely have a lineup that's in any kind of shape to play a real gig. That was the situation at the Scumfest, but the Patrol went on anyway. Taking the stage in wild getups and with about as much shtick as a barrelful of Marx Brothers, they tuned up for a good 15 minutes - and then lip-synched to their single. Board captures that lunatic performance not once, but twice; you can hear Letch Patrol tuning up at the beginning of beginning of side one, and hear their applause at the end.

But there's more here than jokes (although scum rock bands are notoriously funny, not to mention foul-mouthed.) Although scum rock is often portrayed as a latterday brand of CBGB punk rock, these bands owe as much to Elvis and Chuck Berry as the Ramones and Blondie - there are a lot of three-chord blues-based rock 'n roll songs here, delivered with wit and power, and melody, and style. And a lot of fun. I like almost all these bands, but highlights of the tape include The Waldos' ballad "Golden Days," Norman Bates And The Showerheads' rockin' "Marlboro Man," Ed Gein's Car's punkish "A Girl Like You," and Traci Lords' Ex Lovers' anthemic "Just Another Scum Rock Band." Porno Dracula do a great Iggyesque punker and Slugfest thrash out a cowpunk classic of their own.

Scum Rock is the closest thing New York City has to a scene right now (especially since CBGB cancelled its hardcore matinees, making that particular scene homeless.) These bands know each other, play together, hang together, and yeah, they even sound kind of the same - tough, funny, grungy rock 'n rollers, all of 'em. What's the matter with that?

- Jim T.

Local Stuff

DAS DAMEN

Mousetrap, lp
Twin/Tone

Easily Damen's best as well as most accessible record to date, combining elements of early punk, soul, light noise and post-punk, all underlying very catchy, well thought out, and satisfying melodies. Exceptional production pushes this release over the top. For fans of their recent Sub-Pop material, Mousetrap contains an even better version of "Sad Mile," the lp's pick hit as well as nominee for Single Of The Year. Lyle's drumming sees a new light! (Although he's no Matt Coleman)

Das Damen should also win some kind of award for most improved songwriters. These pop hits are just a hell of a lot more consistent, fluent, and just plain rockin'. Lyrics, although still very vague, remain a strong point, hinting at a whole lot of really weird shit, and goddamit, I still hear a heavy Social Distortion influence. Superb back cover photography, mediocre front cover. These guys will be Twin/Tone's Superheros Of The 90's, and I still haven't seen them live. My problem!

- John Lisa

VITAL MUSIC'S NY TRASH XMAS

Vital, 263 E. 10 St., New York NY 10009

Great stuff...songs about dept. store Santas smacking little kids, Santas working for minimum wage. I love the one that goes "Santa's cumming/he's gonna bring the finer things like whores, dope and guns." All the names from the NYC scum scene are here: Shaved Pigs, Letch Patrol, Yeastie Girls, Ed Gein's Car... Christmas from the gutter of society, go get a copy, only 1000 pressed.

- Tom Brebric

NICE STRONG ARM

"Loud Machine E.P."
Homestead

My current favorite NY noise band released 4 songs (two new studio, two old live) on this e.p. while we waited for Homestead to get their new album out. "Cloud Machine," the first of the two originals, shows the Arm moving in a poppier direction (not unlike the same path followed by Sonic Youth, or the Buttholes on their new "Widowmaker" actually). Not that this is anything your mom is gonna hum while she's doing the laundry, but there's a definite prettiness going on beneath the din and swirling guitar effects. The bassline on "Cop Show" deserves some kind of award. The two live cuts on side two sound best turned up real loud on headphones late at night.

- Jim T.

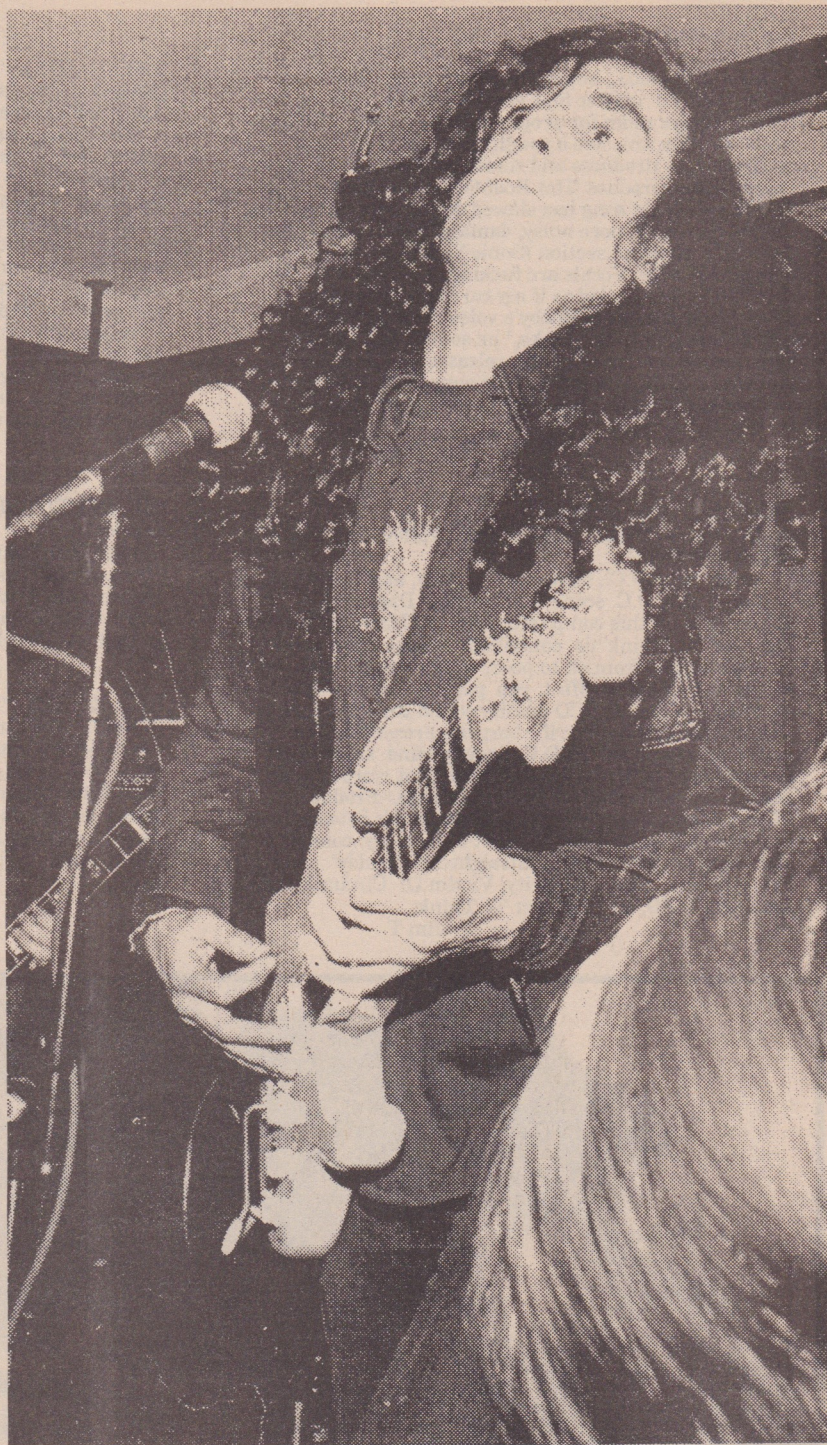
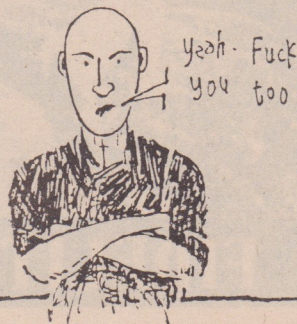


Photo by Andy Peters



SOULSIDE
Hot Bodi-Gram, lp
Dischord

Now disbanded, hopefully not for good, Soulside prove that no matter how good a band's style is, there's always room for progress. Recording in Holland while on tour, this has a rough, fatigued feel. They re-direct the tiredness and somehow find power and energy left to produce "Hot Bodi-Gram," a masterpiece. The pace of most song has slowed down, now pulverizing the listener with more noisy, damaging guitar and that incredible rhythm section (Sonic Youth could get a pointer or two). Vocals are fucking amazing, and on first listen, it sounded as if my turntable was slow, due to the deepness of Bobby's voice. And they're still full of feeling (on "Pembroke," he sounds like Danzig). Also new to other Soulside releases is that the guitarist and drummer sing (?) a song each. This lp far surpasses their first lp, and gives "Trigger" a run for its money.

- Tom Angelli

DC TODAY '89 Compilation

% Clockwork Tapes, 2417 Hidden Valley La., Silver Spring MD 20904
30 bands from D.C., suburban Virginia, and Maryland - basically, the D.C. scene that isn't on Dischord or Sammach is on this comp (although the Holy Rollers and Shudder To Think do contribute songs). The sound quality ranges from ok to poor, with a lot of that whooshing doppler effect you get on 3rd and 4th generation dubs, but CD-quality sound isn't the point here. At \$3, this is a terrific bargain, presenting the entire spectrum of the D.C. underground scene, from monster thrash to classic punk rock. Not surprisingly, politics turns up frequently in the lyrics. Producer Mike Straight interviews some of the bands between cuts (a clever idea, wish I had thought of it on my comps), and there's not one generic straightedge "buddy" song. Favorite cuts: Moral Minority, Victim Of Circumstance, Agent 86, MFD, and Shudder To Think.

- Jim T.

POISON IDEA

"Kick Out The Jams"/"Just To Get Away" 7"
American Leather, 1429 S. 14th #412, Portland OR 97201

After many an article about Poison Idea, I finally get to hear what the hell they're about. And the conclusion? The size of this band can be compared to the size of their sound; big, enormous, mammoth. This 2 song picture disc single puts to shame about 99.9% of the hardcore out there today, and proves that generic only applies to bands with 0% motivation and inspiration. "Just To Get Away" is amazingly energetic and powerful and they rip on MC5's "Kick Out The Jams." I feel sorry for the kids who write those classified ads wanting only straightedge hardcore, because they're missing out, big time! If this is still readily available, you know what to do. And if it isn't, do like myself and search for their other (sure to be) gems.

- Tom A.

LIE DETECTORS - "Steel Belted Radial Burnouts From London"

PO Box 366, Sparkill, NY 10976
Great lyrics here diss Bush's "1000 Points Of Light" speech, Ollie North, Catholic hypocrisy, and there's a goofy track about the Tidy Bowl Man, all set to fast grungy punk-rock. Reminds me a lot of Stisism. \$4

- Jim T.

BREATHERS - "Normal, Illinois" EP

% Gaffin, 129 Lindsey Ct, Franklin Park, NJ 08823
Cheesey new-wave pop, somewhere between The Cars and Billy Idol, with two power ballads thrown in for maximum commercial potential. I don't think they're trying to sell out, this is probably just the sound they like. Yuck. Produced by Chris Gibson, whose own bands, not surprisingly, sounded a lot like this. I'll pass.

- Jim T.



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* Also available as cassette.

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If anyone has seen numbers 39 and 40, please let us know!



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THE FRONT

The Front, lp

CBS

Wait a second, let me find my bearings. This album cover has me dizzy. Whoaaa...what school of design allows graphic artists to create album covers with fluorescent orange and shocking blue? It makes your eyes pulsate. This album is a fantastic piece of work. It sizzles much like The Cult at their finest. Yet, The Front has a distinctive style all their own. How can I describe it? They groove with a feel for the underground scene of today, and the cool, driving beat of yesterday's alternative icons (i.e. Television, Bush Tetras, even Patti Smith.) They use an amazing mixture of sound effects to accentuate the meaning of their words. Children playing, rain falling, and ghoulish voice-overs float over guitar riffs, setting them apart from most of the new bands on the scene. It's like a trip through Disneyland. Much like Peter Pan's ride, it makes your eyes pulsate. Well, mine did.

- Debi Rotmil

SOUNDGARDEN

Louder Than Love, lp

A&M

Rich skaters who've discovered heavy metal.

- Cold-Iron

HARD ONS

Love Is A Battlefield of Broken Hearts, lp

Taang

Australia's eternal punk adolescents actually sing about something other than fornication on this lp...quite a change for them. Melodic guitar-oriented punk with catchy songs like "Missing You" and "Seeing You," don't worry though - this three-piece hasn't forgotten their offensive roots. Check "Get Wet" or "Do It With You." On the way to adulthood.

- Tom B.

CAT BUTT

Journey To The Center Of..., lp

Sub-Pop

Sub-Pop has many really cool bands and this 6-song maxi-ep will prove that Cat Butt are cool too, even though they do have the generic sound of the label. Still another N.Western band playing out their interpretation of Stooges-style pre-punk. Just a few spins of this one will give you a pretty clear idea of Cat Butt's sound. David Duet has a fairly grungy voice which can resemble the legendary Mark Arm when he shrieks it out. Nice slide guitar on "Sedgwick" and brilliant heavy Iomi/Sabbath guitar riffage on "Zombie." CB even resemble the Buttholes in certain areas, which always winds up a plus. Produced by Jack Endino, as usual.

- John Lisa

THE VIVIANES

Vivianade, lp

Hit & Run, Box 44302, Cleveland OH 44114

"Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned." This band from Cleveland sizzles like a brush fire. Diane Duncan, the lead singer, vents out steam in a barrage of angst. She and the band pour out soul and pain on this ep with a pulsating, headbanging rhythm which accompanies the "I loved you but you didn't love me...fuck off" verses. Those who have had their fair share of crappy relationships will relate to the message, despite the lack of melody and awkward playing. Yet the lyrics are strong with anger and self-righteousness, dealing with the struggle to save ones' sanity from the disillusionment of love (or sex) gone wrong. Vivicide is a good catharsis for perpetually pissed off people. No major tunes here, but the anger sears your gut...and feels good.

- Debra Rotmil



HARD-ONS

NEW YORK ROCKERS

Compilation Cassette

ROIR (611 Broadway, #411. New York NY 10012)

Sub-titled "An Anthology of Anti-Hits And Rare Tracks From Manhattan's Original Rock Underground," and compiled by Andy Schwartz, "editor and publisher of New York Rocker from 1979-1983, the crucial years of 'Downtown Heroes,'" this is the latest cassette in ROIR's series of retrospective compilations (marking the label's 10th anniversary.) It should have been a blast. And if they'd just called it "The Best of ROIR" or something, I'd happily recommend it to younger listeners hungry for a taste of what the late 70's and early 80's rock scene was like in fab New York.

But calling it "New York Rockers" (using the New York Rocker magazine logo for the cover art) obviously implies that you're getting a genuine taste of the great NY punk scene that New York Rocker magazine helped document (and, to be fair, nurture.) But all dozen of these cuts are not original lp versions or even newly unearthed demos or outtakes, but merely cuts from previous ROIR cassettes. That severely limits the scope of the project, as well as the quality.

I'm sorry, I don't want a new generation discovering Television for the first time with this murky live recording of "Friction" when the Marquee Moon version is so much more magnificent. Nor should the Dictators be remembered for their 1981 reunion concert. Alfonia Tims was never a major force in the New York rock underground, the Bad Brains were from D.C. and Suicide were from Mars... So what are they doing here? And there's way too much fake jazz by the likes of James White and the Lounge Lizards on a tape that's supposed to be about "rockers." The New York Dolls' deserve better than the unreleased demo version of "Jet Boy," and with the whole Bush Tetras catalog to choose from (all their records were compiled on ROIR's "Better Late Than Never"), I wouldn't have picked "Rituals." "Too Many Creeps" would've been a lot more appropriate. And finally, any pretense this tape has of capturing the New York Rocker era falls completely apart with the complete absence of the Hoboken contingent - Feelies, dBs, Bongos, Individuals, the bands that defined the New York Rocker aesthetic.

So if you want a sampling of what ROIR has released over the past ten years, you could do worse than pick this up. But don't think you're getting anything like what the jacket copy promises this tape to be. What's really funny is that if somebody had tried to pull a flimsy scam like this back in the Rocker days, Andy Schwartz & Co. would've been the first ones to rip 'em to shreds.

- Jim T.



Back From Elba

ANTIETAM

"Eaten Up By Hate" EP
Triple X

It's fitting for an issue of Jersey Beat that features one Louisville band to announce a new record by Antietam, in many ways the Louisville band - even though the members have lived in Hoboken for over 5 years. Tara Key's guitar, back in the days of the Babylon Dance Band, influenced a generation of Louisville would-be punkers, not the least of whom was Dave Grubbs, who'd amplify Tara's distorto-frenzy style into the sonic mindfuck of Squirrel Bait (and later Bastrol).

Tara and her partner, Tim Harris, haven't had an easy time of it. After settling in Hoboken and releasing a well-received debut album, the band booted original drummer Mike Wiegert for dubious artistic reasons and recruited a more professional-sounding twerp. Antietam then made what many regard as perhaps the worst record of the decade, *Back To Elba*. Bassist Wolf Knapp left the band, Tim and Tara couldn't find a permanent drummer; there were sporadic gigs, a tease of a Homestead 7-inch...and now, finally, word of a new deal with L.A.'s Triple X Records and this 3-song ep, produced by Georgia and Ira of Yo La Tengo.

"Eaten Up By Hate" gives us a much milder, less frenetic - say it, prettier - Antietam. Echoes of Tara's ear-blistering white-noise guitar are felt but never fully experienced. There's some guitar on the sordid, but it's far more melodic and restrained than Antietam's best moments of yore. It's not that Tara Key was a girl who played like a guy; more like a person who played as if she weren't human at all. Few guitarists of any gender subsumed their own identity so completely into the experience of making noise. She was a wonder to behold - hair flying, voice screeching, yodeling, imploring, singing, body shaking. She never really loses control on this new record. When she and Tim harmonize on the line "eaten up by hate/living in pain," they almost sound like a Hobokenized John Doe and Exene, playing out their own version of domestic hell in song. The tune has its guitar solo, but it's a pale shadow of the old acid-drenched fury of earlier work, and it ends with a bouncy bass riff straight out of Jonathan Richman's "Roadrunner."

"Naples," written by Tim, is even prettier, a love ballad sung by Tara over an acoustic guitar and light drums. Its dreamy quality almost suggests Fleetwood Mac.

I knew the third song on this ep would be an instrumental even before I heard it. Antietam is one of the few bands around that does meaningful instrumentals. "Day For Tomorrow," with its rollicking beat, drum rolls, and organ fills, has a fun, surfy feel. It might not inspire the headbanging dementia of some earlier Antietam tunes, but it's still a good one.

So, is this the new kinder, gentler Antietam for the Nineties? Or will their forthcoming lp, *Burgoo*, rekindle the old fire and unleash more of that magical Tara Key guitar hoodoo? Stay tuned.

- Jim Testa

JEAN-PAUL SARTRE EXPERIENCE

The Size Of Food, lp
Communion/Skyclad

Out of nowhere they come. New Zealand?!? A native New Zealander I met at a Moonie farm in California told me it was the most boring place on earth. Hmmm. There seems to be a number of fine bands coming from there. Check out Straitjacket Fits, the Verlaines, Tall Dwarves, the Clean, the Bats, but most of all find both releases by the Jean-Paul Sartre Experience.

Communion Records is licensed by the NJ based, ultra-cool label Skyclad. Skyclad is mainly run by a former Jem co-worker and friend of mine, Dave Hall. In just the past few years, Skyclad has released about 50 records, many of which with that psychedelic/garage bend that both of us love. Some definite recommendations would include the Shamen, Nick Haefner & Paul Roland (both spiritual children of Syd Barrett), the Cynics, and Doctor Bombay. Skyclad has also licensed two great cover compilations this past year, the Kinks and Byrds tributes on England's Imaginary Records. Let's not forget their rare Sex Pistols stuff, and first two Teardrop Explodes reissues. Pretty impressive!!

The first JPSE lp was a laid-back cosmic gem, mostly acoustic and most subtle. Their second, The Size Of Food, is totally electric and just as cool.

A well-balanced brew of moody, impassioned double-guitar strumming, equally effective elec. bass, and drum churning. Great vocals once again, with instantly memorable chorus/chants. Those fine background guitars create much of their distinctive sound. I heard parts Dream Syndicate, NY's own secret, Band Of Outsiders, and even some Big Star-like vocal parts. This music unites with a certain universal psychedelic spirit that transcends time and place. It could be 1967, or it could be right now, or anywhere in between. May they make it all the way to these shores, and soon!

- Bruce Gallanter

E=MC2 & GUITAR

Giddy Up, Einstein, lp

Reptile, 1107 Vincente #2, San Francisco CA 94116

This San Francisco band has a moody-alternative rock sound that makes the connotation of their "brave new world" name somewhat odd. But what's in a name? And what's in a face? Flip the sleeve over and there's a photo of the two who make up the band. It looks like a publicity photo for "21 Jump Street." They're slick looking...or maybe it's just the lighting.

This ep is better than I may be conveying. The sound is akin to Roxy Music without the glitz. Mark Cult's vocals are good; they suit the temper of the tracks without being too stylish. In other words, he doesn't fall into that Bryan Ferry trap (a bit too tender & sexy for me). His voice is bold enough to tackle any genre or style. Andrew Scott's guitar shines as well, esp. on "Eurotrash," a funky, haunting cut punctuated with Andy Sumner-type licks harkening back to "When The World Is Running Down." East meets West respectively on this one, but if you're looking for grit or the answer to the relative time span projected by the speed of light from here to Pluto, processed for synthesizer and drum machine, forget it... This stuff is more like Health Class than Physics...but the former isn't so bad. Sex Ed is usually taught there.

- Debi Rotmil



THE BIG IFS

MIXED MEDIA 3-song Demo
PO Box 301, Belleville, NJ 07109

There's been a lot of talk about this band. This is not a punk band but a new wave band from NJ. They probably pick up a lot of underage teenage bitches, but not me! But if you're planning that type of get together, write them.

- Cold-Iron

BOOTBEAST

There was an attempt at a scare/gore theatrical revolution from Phoenix called Mighty Sphincter. The band's stuff sounded like Saturday morning cartoon monster themes. It was pretty stupid. Bootbeast, with former members of Mighty Sphincter, carries the same idea but their style is more psychedelic. It's a lot better, too. Who knows, maybe they learned how to play their instruments. \$6 10 song cassette to PO Box 2012, Phoenix AZ 85280.

- Cold Iron

IMPETIGO - "Giallo" demo

You gotta love Stevo's voice - Linda Blair right before she throws up on that priest. He must choke at every show. Geraldo would freak on these lyrics. The band's fuzzy but tight. Speedcore... Send them your skull and 4 bucks to 307 Lindell Dr. Apt. 1, Normal IL 61761.

- Cold Iron

THE ONIX "Life Witness" demo

% Eric Lachance, 8180 Ave. De Garonne, Charlesbourg, Quebec, Canada G1G 3K7

An historical artifact. This band has the potential to be God II. A 5-piece from Quebec, "Life Witness" covers the whole 4-track punk spectrum in 10 songs: The power of D.C., the image of the Crucifucks, and the accent of Napoleon. Solid. Onix lives, man!

- Cold-Iron



Demos



THE BIG IFS (Self titled cassette)

Garage punk/pop with a catchy guitar sound that I can't help but like. This four piece from NYC also chucks in an occasional folk influence. The music on this is sort of like kicking REM in the ass and cheering them on. Songs such as "I Used To Love Her (But Now I Never Do)" and "Working People" make good social points with humor. The Big Ifs play the NY and Boston circuit frequently so check 'em out. They're a fun band with a lot of enthusiasm. Cassettes are \$5 from The Big Ifs, PO Box 1462 Madison Sq. Sta., NYC 10159.

THE TONEBENDERS (DEMO)

With songs about boxes of love, punching lovers in the face, and too many strangers in one's bed, you just can't go wrong. Post-punk pop with a lot of competent effort behind it, this 3-piece leaves you begging for more. The band claims they consider their material commercial and accessible but I still think it's great. The songwriting is well thought out and centers around relationships and other related dilemmas. The band's got a CD and cassette-only release in the works, and if they match this demo, they're destined for much bigger and better things. Get this tape from The Tonebenders, PO Box 5156, Hoboken NJ 07030.

TRIBULATION - A Better Way To Rock demo

Barely a year old, this young 4-piece from Morris County NJ describes themselves as "a 70's rock band that jams with a heavy edge." The interesting thing here is that the band cites Rush and Dio as influences, two bands that make my aural senses violently ill. Yet I still like the sound Tribulation puts out. Singer Aileen Husk has a sultry voice with a rage that this demo doesn't quite capture and personally, I'd say her vocals are the strongest aspect of the band. Demos and way cool bandannas are available from Ralf Klotz, 316 Marc Blvd, Boonton, NJ 07005.

- above reviews by Tom Brebric

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Dope, Guns & Fucking In The Streets Vol 1-3
Amphetamine Reptile

Amphetamine Reptile is on its way to becoming the Sub Pop of the 90's. This new lp is an excellent compilation from the first 3 7" ep's, now all out of print. Highlights are tunes from Mudhoney, Halo of Flies, and Tad, with heavy competition from Tar, Helios Creed, and the Thrown Ups. Other tracks vary from the grungiest post-punk to the most unsettling distorto-noise skum rock. Most with good production.

- John L.

PLAID RETINA

Pink Eye, lp
Lookout (Box 1000, Laytonville, CA 95454)

Plain Retina mix vocals that would better suit a hardcore band with music that has a definite Nomeansno influence. Difference is, Nomeansno can pull it off because of their musical abilities and innovativeness. Listen to Nomeansno's "Junk" and then Plaid Retina's attempt on "Someone Else's Cup." Bits and pieces are salvageable, but otherwise this is uninteresting.

- Tom A.

GANG GREEN

Older...Budweiser, lp
Roadracer

Same old story. Eight yrs in a hardcore band, it's time to call it quits. Their message is worn out. How many songs can you write about beer? As in all veteran hc bands, they've gone into that more than slightly metal crossover thing. They're probably even seeing a little popularity. Available at your local record store.

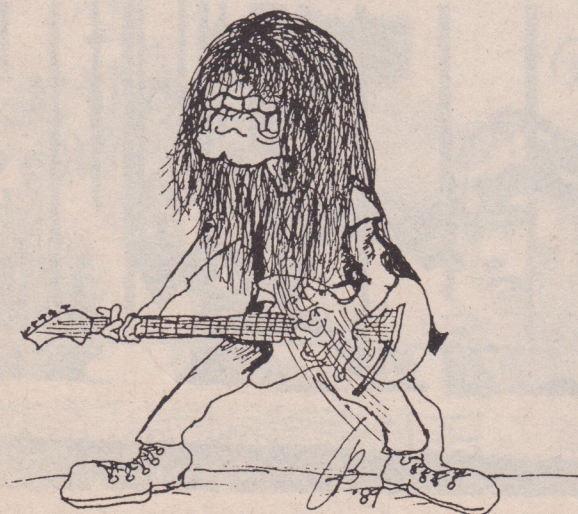
- Cold-Iron

THE FUZZTONES

In Heat, lp
Beggars Banquet/RCA

More organ dominated 60's rehash from the Fuzztones (a veteran NY garage band that relocated to Los Angeles a few years ago). This time, they really seem to be breaking out of the underground. Contributing factors just might be the better production, fresher vocals, more technical guitar playing, tight all-around musicianship, and honest roots in 60's styled music. In Heat also dabbles in some country and soul, as well as an early Stones influence. With the new material being catchier than ever, the Fuzztones can remain on record as being a tough band to describe with one genre of music.

- John L.



NIRVANA

Bleach, lp
Sub-Pop

The first time I got to hear Nirvana was when I got to see them live during the '89 New Music Seminar, and they were impressive, to say the least. Of course, the best part of their live show came when some totally wasted guy came onstage and the band "took care of him." But this album, while it's pretty good, is bland and kind of boring. Harsh vocals, gritty guitars, driving rhythm section - just like Mudhoney or Green River, just not as good. Well, Side B has grown on me more than at first, but this was still disappointing. They've gone back to being a 3 piece, so maybe things will pick up.

- Tom A.

SLOPPY SECONDS

"Come Back Traci"/"Leaving On A Jet Plane" 45
Toxic Shock

A great single. Buddy Holly woulda been proud. Butt kickin' punk'n'roll that deserves a hell of a lot more attention than it's getting. But the single, buy the lp. Christ, sit down, pop a brew, put a Sloppy Seconds record on the stereo, and just ENJOY music for once, ya putz.

- Ben Weasel

THE LEE HARVEY OSWALD BAND

12" EP
Touch & Go, Box 25520, Chicago IL 60625

From the band's name to their lovely jacket cover, I knew I was in for a treat. Loud, distorted instruments, belting out tuneful (out of tune?) works of unattractive, mesmerizing rock. The downside is those vocals, sounding like they were recorded over the phone in a prison or through Fisher Price's Studio For Kids with a busted amp. They're pretty annoying. 6 songs, one a Sonics cover, and my personal favorite, "When The Satans Come Marching In." Thank you, Touch & Go, for a quality package, including a great cover and insert!

- Tom A.

REVIEWS

ELEVENTH DREAM DAY

Beet, lp
Atlantic

Chicago's Eleventh Dream Day sing a lot of songs about traveling - in trains, in cars, or just in their minds. And I like that. Singer/guitarist/songwriter Rick Rizzo can take his place alongside Steve Wynn and Jeffrey Lee Pierce in that unending parade of Dylanesque band leaders; the poet as a romantic hero, exploring the minutiae of Americana. In "Between Here And There," co-written with guitarist Baird Figi, Rizzo extols the glories of letting your mind wander while looking out the window of a moving train: "As the wheels roll, it soothes your soul/as the scenes go by, it makes you higher/like the MC5, way past midnight/but the train must stop and the song is over." 11th DD drops names like that a lot - MC5, Faye Dunaway, Ezra Pound - using them to illuminate the small moments that comprise their songs. Drummer Janet Bean contributes "Bagdad's Last Ride," another train ride song, and Figi wrote "Bomb The Mars Hotel," a meditation on wiping out Grateful Deadism forever. The band enhances all these songs with judicious slide guitar, harmony vocals, and some delicious psychedelic guitar jams that reminded me of the Dream Syndicate. A very tasty lp, proof that this major label alternative marketing business does have its upside.

- Jim T.

FANZINES

Lookout #34

PO Box 1000, Laytonville, CA 95454 \$1

Open it from one side, it's a music zine, with Operation Ivy on the cover. Flip it over and open it from the other side and it's a political zine. Basically this is Larry Livermore re-inventing Maximum Rock N Roll in his own image, but it's done so well that it's nearly essential reading.

Shredding Material #4

2515 Biddle Rd., Middletown MD 21769 \$1.65

1/2 size zine with lots of the usual - skating, band interviews, record reviews, comix - everything crammed onto one page. The Readers Digest of punk. Still, I liked it.

Good Clean Fun #1

% The Daily Californian, 2150 Dwight Way, Berkeley, CA 94704 \$1

Two pages of Gene Mahoney's "Good Clean Fun" comix for a buck. Yeah, sure.

The Carnifex Network #2

PO Box 479164, Chicago IL 60647 \$1
A forum for "libertines, social mutants, sexual anarchists, outcasts from the underground, and people who just can't see straight." Which doesn't suggest how dull and proper most of this is, except for the classifieds, which are pretty kinky, and the comic strip, which is funny.

What The Fuck #4

2340 W. 24 St., Chicago IL 60608

The biggest 25 cent zine going, it's got to cost a least \$1.05 to mail first-class. The cheap xeroxing defeats the excellent photos by editor Martin. Op Ivy, Naked Raygun, Sloppy Seconds, No Minds, and Wind Of Change interviews.

Assault With Intent To Free #7

PO Box 1484, Oxford MS 38655 \$1.65

Nice looking zine with solid interviews with little-known but deserving bands (Hunger Artist, Neurosis, Dead Horse), poetry, opinions, photos.

Hands Up #4

% Todd Ransick, 10104 Donegal Ct., Potomac MD 20854

A bit skimpy, what with 2 pages of records reviews and fairly redundant interviews with Verbal Assault, Token Entry, and Gorilla Biscuits (aren't there any bands in Maryland for this guy to interview?). Typical SE/HO mentality - NY bands rule, ok? Uh...no.

NOISY CONCEPT #1

% Mike Thain, 621 Bassett Rd., Bay Village, OH 44140 \$1

Formerly Restore zine, same basic look and content, digest-sized hc zine with some good interviews and nice photos. This ish has Token Entry, Murphys Law, Knifedance, Screeching Weasel, and Lost Cause, among others, plus reviews, etc.

Boiling Point #3

% Dennis Cheng, 105 Eaglecroft Rd., Westfield, NJ 07090 \$2

A world of difference between #1 and #3 of this "diehard hardcore" zine. The editors - to their credit - are finally admitting to some of the flaws in their scene; I'd call their approach now "single-minded," which is a big step beyond "close-minded." Like when they ask a band if they don't think straight edge has become "trendy and shallow," or when they admit that hardcore doesn't need "more songs about friendship, unity, and being true." Anyway, this issue has long, in-depth interviews with Beyond, Fugazi, Sick Of It All, and Raw Deal, and Boiling Point's usual A+ layout and photos.

The Village Noize #8

48-54 213 St., Bayside, NY 11364 \$2
Better and better, with Faith No More, Killing Joke, a profile of Sub Pop Records, and cartoonist Peter Bagge. Neat photos and a nifty hand-painted cover.

Dagger #11

% Tim Hinely, PO Box 460, Somers Pt, NJ 08244 \$1.65

Interviews with Tad and Tar, which gives you an idea of Tim's vocabulary. No, seriously, good interviews made readable by Tim's sense of humor (incl the Texas Instruments piece I always wanted to do), and lots of reviews.

Chairs Missing #6

PO Box 375, Fairfield, CT 06430 \$2

Interviews with Das Damen (Scott only got two of them, we got all four, and his is from last June, ha ha), American Standard (we did them last issue), and 76% Uncertain (which I actually read in its entirety), plus the usual (and unusual) reviews and stuff (like Scott's Brazilian records roundup).

NO IDEA #7

P.O. Box 13018, Gainesville FL 32604 \$2.50

Wow! 3-color cover, a cool 7" with Mutley Chix and Crimpshine, and interviews with the Lemonheads, Alice Donut, Chemical People and Das Damen (oh no, not again!) for \$2.50. Get it.



Just Think Contortion #5

1413 Douglas Ave., Kalamazoo MI 49007 \$1.25

Messy xerox'd zine with the usual hc band interviews, skate photos, record reviews, etc. Saving grace is the sense of humor prevalent throughout, as with the interview with Ryan Gage ("we just decided to pick a nobody out of thin air and interview him"), which is really pretty funny. Asked the same generic questions that most hc bands get asked, Ryan Nobody comes up with better than usual answers.

Wordburger #8

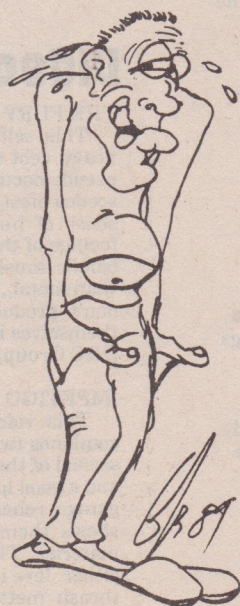
325 Douglas St., San Francisco CA 94114 \$1

You can tell the editor is an anarchist - this doesn't come with an issue #, a price, or an address anywhere on it. Very funny account of last summer's anarchist convention in Frisco makes this worth a visit.

DISOBEY #3

3739 Oak Glen Rd., Newbury Pk, CA 91320 \$1

Pretty cool hc zine with the usual stuff, Stikky, Dissent, Moral Crux and Apocalypse are among the interviewees and there's some scene reports and photos too.



CASSETTES

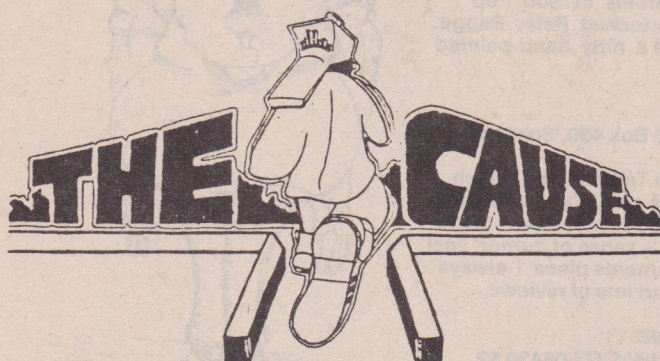
INDUS

"Illusion," cassette

PO Box 604, New Monmouth, NJ 07748

I'll be honest. Indus makes the sort of post-hippy jazz rock that usually sends me heading straight for the Pepto Bismal. But in fact, I found this lp-length cassette quite pleasing. The husband/wife team of Bob and Joy Gamache have found a subtle, adult-contempo sound that still manages to offer a lot; Joy's husky vocals almost resemble an Americanized Nico on the slower tracks, and on the bluesier numbers, she has a nice Bonnie Raitt quality. The songs are well-written, thoughtful, and filled with tasteful guitar and enough rhythmic changes to keep things interesting. Indus reminds me most of bands like Frozen Concentrate and Tiny Lights, who fuse a modern club-rock sensibility with 60's folk and jazz influences. What Mickey Yuck used to call "Rutgersmusic."

- Jim T.



THE CAUSE

"Courage" cassette

8 Bloomfield Dr., Mt. Holly, NJ 08060

This young So. Jersey hardcore band has matured since their first demo, "Kids With A Cause." The songwriting has progressed beyond the simplistic (generic) themes of friendship and betrayal seen through the eyes of straightedge youth. They're still writing songs about their own feelings, but perhaps because the band is itself embroiled in mid-adolescence, those feelings are growing more complex and therefore more engaging to the listener. The music has a rough, raw edge, and although vocalist Jay sometimes goes a little too far to give his singing that clipped, "hard" NY/HC sound, he gets his messages across with energy and conviction. This band is desperate to get gigs, so if you're booking shows in the South Jersey area, drop them a line.

- Jim T.

MILE ONE

"Coolidge's Suitecase," cassette

4634 Stevens Ave. So., Minneapolis MN 55409

I caught this band during one of the showcase gigs at last summer's New Music Seminar and wasn't all that impressed. The guitars seemed overly U2ish and the songs too R.E.M. influenced. Those influences still make themselves heard on this cassette release, but with songwriting this strong, and production and vocals this crisp and bold, I found myself wondering why this wound up on a cassette and not immediately picked up by some smart indie label. It's way better than most of the college radio fodder pop albums I've heard this year, and coming out of Minneapolis, the band has a built-in edge: strong local crowds for support and a sexy home base (next to Seattle and maybe Austin, Minneapolis is probably the coolest town to come from these days.) Watch for the name.

- Jim T.

MELVINS

Ozma, lp

Boner

Attention, all high school metalheads! You NEED the Melvins, and so does the rest of the human race for that matter. I cannot stress this enough. This is probably the most important record to come out this year. These guys piss in the mouths of Slayer and Motorhead as far as heaviness is concerned, and leave your turntable with a severe case of diarrhea. They are also the slowest band I've ever heard, with production so crisp and crystal clear that you can hear if someone is breaking in the background during songs. The CD comes with the entire "Gluey Porch Treatment" lp (now out of print) and is limited, not to mention that the opening song will vibrate your whole house. An instant classic from the heaviest band on the planet. So what are you waiting for?

- John Lisa

THE WONDER STUFF

Hup, lp

Polygram

Very original...Big Audio Dynamite meets The Beatles. Poppy fun teenage girls dig this stuff and so do I.

- Cold Iron

DEATH OF SAMANTHA

Come, All Ye Faithless, lp

Homestead

Calculated offensiveness has become a Homestead trademark, so the songs about dead Jews, geisha girls, and so on will probably have to be taken with a grain of salt. But musically, this is the strongest Death of Samantha lp to date (at least since their debut album), with touches like "Rosenberg Summer's" strings that quash the notion that DoS is just another funny punk band. John Petkovic breathes emotion into lyrics that are various wired, jokey, and off the wall, in the great tradition of unpredictable Cleveland rock 'n roll.

- Jim T.

MEKONS

Rock N Roll, lp

Twin/Tone

A pervasive darkness that's prevalent throughout this album makes it undeniably appealing. Songs of senselessness, loneliness, and desperation, all wrapped in captivating vocals - musical art. Sally Timms' vocal ability combined with her searching material stand out among the other fine efforts presented here. The album jacket art captures the senses along with the album content. Superb.

- Tom Brebric

Video

THE FURY - "Reflections Of Unwasted Time"

This self-produced video by a local metal band owes a heavy debt to "This Is Spinal Tap," since it's framed as a pseudo-documentary on the band's beginnings and behind-the-scenes lifestyle. It's funny with a very cool, self-mocking sense of humor, interspersed with concert and rehearsal footage of the band running through some of their songs. The band's music is fast, melodic thrash, almost more hardcore than metal,, very catchy and quite engaging. Why more bands don't produce this sort of fun, homemade advertisement for themselves is beyond me. I enjoyed this a lot.

D&C Group, PO Box 57, Island Park, NY 11558

IMPETIGO

This video comp from Chicago-area meta'heads Impetigo combines two different shows and some rehearsal footage. The second of the concerts is the best, with a two-camera setup and a good look at the band in action. The third segment, a garage rehearsal featuring the band's new second guitarist, shows them goofing around and running through some newer material. The thing with Impetigo is Steve-O's voice. You either love it or hate it. I like it a lot. The sound is thrash metal with a heavy bottom, the songs often have a goofy flavor, and the video quality is very good.

% Mark Sawickis, 224 Prospect Rd #C26, Normal, IL 61704

COWBOY AND SPINGIRL

"Cowboy And Spingirl," ep
Subway Organisation (British import)

The last time I saw Cowboy And Spingirl (i.e. Frank Bednash and Donna Esposito) play was August 14, 1986. I remember the date only because a band I was in played on the same bill. That's three and a half years ago, and side two of the e.p. had already been recorded back then (at Mitch Easter's then-trendy Drive-In Studio). Listening to those songs today, they sound so anachronistic - did anybody really ever mix their guitars that clean and bright? And those songs! Nobody's been that happy and innocent since the Carter Administration!

The first side of the e.p. has a more contemporary feel, with grungier guitars and a heavier sound. Cowboy & Spingirl had to go to England to get this released; like the Cheepsksates, they couldn't get arrested back in New York. It's nice to finally hear these recordings (it would have been even nicer if Frank and Donna had credited the other musicians who played on the sessions with them); the grungier side one of this ep even offers a little hope that the Hoboken Pop sound will survive the 80's.

- Jim T.

THE SHAMS

"Only A Dream"/"3 a.m.," 45
SOL/Dutch East

The three women in The Shams harmonize with the same cozy warmth as The Roches, combining 60's Girl Group kittenishness with an earthier, more modern folk sound. Amy Rigby is the second Last Roundup alumna with a release on SOL, although her band's record is infinitely superior to Angel Dean's. Sue Garner and Amanda Uprichard are the other two Shams, a trio worth seeking out if you're into warm harmonies and pretty songs.

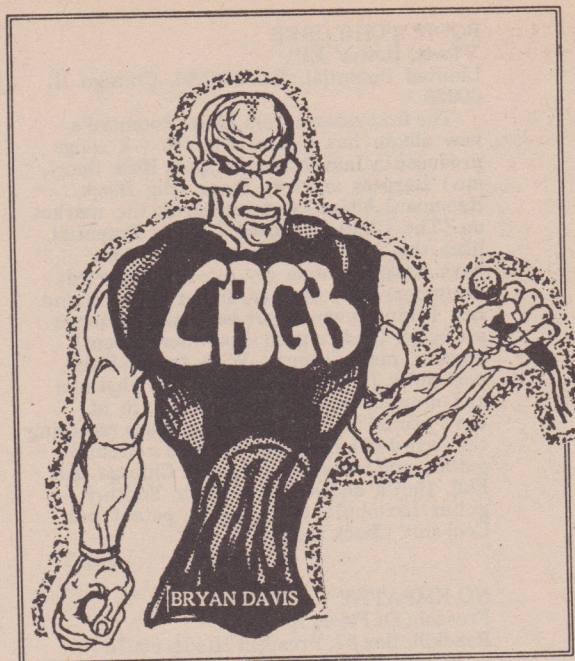
- Jim T.

DIRGE

Soulstorm, lp
Anthrax

Could anything with a guest appearance by a member of Prong not be good? Unfortunately, Tommy Victor is not the only thing Dirge borrows from the masters on this 12 song assault. "Bug Bite" puts the boot on Satanism while "TV Desensitization" slams the tube the way "TV Party" never could. But the overall performance is a matinee version of their mentors. And that's a compliment.

- Michele T.



BIG WHEEL

East End, lp
Giant

Here we have the only credible Squirrel Bait offshoot. Forget Bastro and forget Slint 'cause they don't have the most important factor to make it on the rock scene: Peter Searcy on vocals. Big Wheel take over where Squirrel Bait left off. They succeed in writing incredibly melodic songs on acoustic guitars and then converting them to electric, coming up with punk anthems only comparable to the Huskers at their peak. This is what we've been waiting for. If Big Wheel can continue to present melodic, heartfelt campfire songs with power, they just might be the biggest thing since Husker Du, given a year or two. This is what a Squirrel Bait offshoot should sound like.

- John Lisa

BASTRO

Bastro Diablo Guapo, lp
Homestead

The drum machine has been replaced by a real live drummer (John McEntire) but the Big Black comparisons linger on, due mostly to Dave Grubbs' psychokiller vocal style and his vicious slash 'n burn guitar. On a few cuts ("Shoot Me A Deer" and "Pretty Smart On My Part," especially), Grubbs works in enough melody to remind you he's the guy from Squirrel Bait who actually wrote "Kid Dynamite" and "Sun God." Slint is slow, Big Wheel rocks, but Bastro bites you on the neck and then complains the blood isn't warm enough. Nasty, mean, brutish, and full of migraine-sized guitar noise, Bastro is the Squirrel Bait offshoot for real men.

- Jim T.

FIRE PARTY

"New Orleans Opera," 12" EP
Dischord

Fire Party seem to ride on the coattails of what others call the "D.C. Art Scene," with lyrics like, "Salad! It's the first course/what shall I choose for the main?" Or, "So I listened and ate/soon my stomach was full," from the song "First Course." Boy, those are so "deep" and "meaningful." I'm sure somebody will look into them, because they have to have some hidden meaning. Music gains a plus for having a big big BIG and deep rhythm section, while the vocals totally destroy any chance of this being something good.

- Tom Angelli

POSTER CHILDREN

"Flower Power" EP

Limited Potential, Box 268586, Chicago IL 60626

The first release from Mike Potential's new album has a cute gimmick - 4 songs produced by Iain (Naked Raygun, Rifle Sport, etc.) Burgess and 4 by Steve (Big Black, Rapeman) Albini - sorta cornering the market on "The Chicago Sound." I know Potential likes the Albini side better, and it does have crisper drums (by a since-departed drummer) and a meaner, dirtier guitar sound. But I think it wins more because the songs are better (and - a good sign - more recent); angrier, more intense. With the P-Kids' post-punk (i.e. diluted white funk) rhythms and droning vocals, they'd fit right in at the Pyramid or Lismar Lounge. Since recording the record as a trio, they've added a second guitar, and when I saw them in Chicago last Fall, they'd added a lot of Sonic Youth-y guitar harmonics to an already potent mix. Cool shit. Check it out.

- Jim T.

NO EMPATHY

Freedom Of Flesh, lp

Roadkill, Box 37, Prospect Hts IL 60070

Ferocious, raging hardcore/punk/Oi from Chicago, IL. No Empathy mesh together a dose of oi-influenced music ("Can't You Understand") with Naked Raygun-type catchiness and singalongs ("Oi Across America"). Excellent lyrics (like on "Masturbate") only strengthen this band's second release. And to prove their ability to expand their horizons, side 2 has some long (maybe a bit too long) jam-outs and rock-influenced riffing that gives this band a whole other side. Great!

- Tom Angelli

Rick
Poster Children

Photo by Jim Testa

HERE ARE 6 OF THE BANDS THAT HAVE MADE THE NEW JERSEY SCENE ONE OF AMERICA'S BEST!

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WHITE ZOMBIE

"God Of Thunder" ep

Caroline

Three songs produced by Daniel Rey that kick ass - about time somebody figured out that a White Zombie record needs equal parts kick drum and bass turned ALL THE WAY UP to sound right. The Kiss cover underscores the band's bid to become the new kings of comic-book metal, a goal that's furthered by the killer "Love Razor" and a goosed-up version of "Disaster Blaster" from their last lp. Crank this baby up and PLAY IT REAL LOUD.

- Jim T.

CHEEPSKATES

Songs Vol. 1: Perry Como, ep

Music Maniac (German import)

WHEN PEOPLE WERE SHORTER & LIVED NEAR THE WATER

Bobby, lp

Shimmydisc

More proof, as if any were needed, that it's too easy to get a record out today - not one but two bands who haven't made records, really, so much as they've realized a concept. Or should I say a bad idea. On Bobby, Shimmydisc grunge-rock slimewads When People Were Shorter And Lived Near The Water (even their name is a concept, fer chrissakes) do a whole album's worth of songs by Bobby Goldsboro. They trash 'em, smash 'em, grind 'em up into thrash or, in the case of Goldsboro's shlockola smash hit, "Watching Scotty Grow," cowpunk. Entertaining? A little. Would I pay for a copy of this record? No way.

The Cheepsksates - desperate to get somebody in the U.S.A. to notice them - released as their second German import of the year an 5-song e.p. of Perry Como songs. The funny thing is that "Maybe" and "Round And Round" could actually pass for Cheepsksate originals - the laid back, easy-going pop/rock favored by Shane Faubert & Co. bears a definite resemblance to the laid back, easy-listening pop of the 50's. Songs Vols. II and III are supposed to be Dolly Parton and Dean Martin. Will this get them an American record deal? Weirder things have happened.

Maybe Shimmydisc will pick them up.

- Jim T.

THE TINKLERS

Casserole, lp

Shimmydisc

Looks like 2 burnt out hippies have gotten hold of a lot of old Shimmydisc records and decided that they were gonna have a crack at it. Noise, noise and more noise overrides silly, strange Bongwaterish stories about every little thing. Lotsa different instruments used. That's it in a nutshell. Strictly for Shimmydisc fans.

- John L.

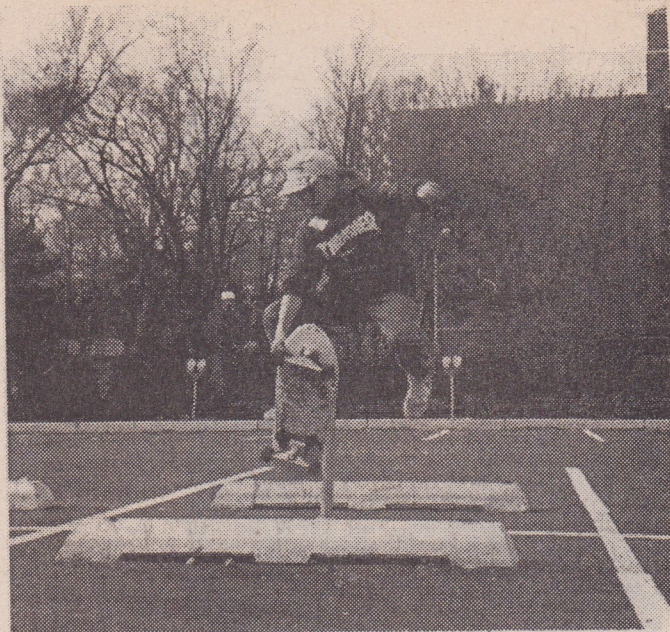
MDC

Metal Devil Cokes, lp

Boner (Box 2081, Berkeley, CA 94702)

Back again, they deliver and don't disappoint. As always, they incorporate various influences to churn out their brand of hardcore. This time around, there's everything from folk to a little dinner table music (with lyrics that hit harder than anything I've seen in a while), to the standard quick punk. While not as good as "More Damn Christians," this lp is something to look into, and like their previous releases, the graphics are always top notch. Best songs include "Acid Reindeer," "Tofu Spaghetti," and "Deep In The Heart" (mocking ignorance and injustice in racist Texas.) Good stuff.

- Tom A.



CHICKEN SCRATCH

Important People Lose Their Pants, lp

Comm 3

People are going to compare Chicken Scratch to a lot of other bands. I mean, it's pretty inevitable. The three that come to mind are Honeymoon Killers, Dinosaur Jr., and early Sonic Youth. There's a nice upbeat rhythm driving their "scratchy" tunes here and there, often meandering on the border of Velvet Underground with their intense feedback/noise inspired pogo rock. Now & then, there's an absence of solid bass, which adds Pussy Galore to the list of comparisons. This is actually not a bad release; the songs are short, a bit more melodic, and well produced. It's not often that a band's name describes its music almost exactly.

- John L.

HAND OF GLORY

Far From Kith And Kin, lp

Skyclad

A mild 60's surf influence can be found among the fairly heavy guitars and Danzig/Elvis type vocals. Occasionally a nice harmony will come rolling around amidst the gloomy basslines which dominate about half this record. Hand Of Glory are just one of those bands who'll appeal to such a wide variety of audiences but most likely won't be picked out as a favorite by anyone. There are too many downbeat songs which makes it rough getting through both sides more than once (esp for the punk crowd.) Once again, no memorable, outstanding songs. Good try, though.

- John L.

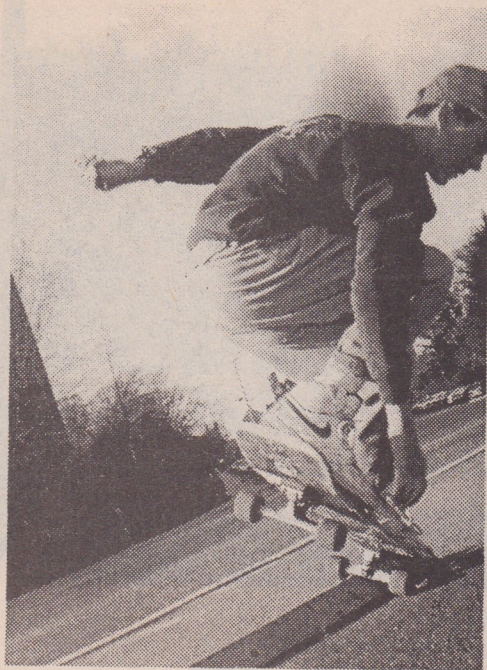
3

Dark Days Coming, lp

Dischord

This is MUST, plain and simple. Powerful melodic post-punk, on probably the best indie label. Jeff Nelson's band circa '86-'88 has the house rockin' once again. 3 actually don't do anything original but their music is so open, honest, and heartfelt that it makes it hard to take the wax off the turntable. Lyrics seem to reflect on a slim thread of hope existing in a world of ignorance, poverty, pollution, lies, and hate. But it also seems that they base all of their harmonies and structures on that hope. Way cool guitars, too. The depressing thing is that the band that made this record has broken up. Would've been cool to see 'em live. Can't win 'em all.

- John L.



POI DOG PONDERING
Poi Dog Pondering, lp
CBS

This is the stuff that post-modern hippies would probably play. Lots of acoustic guitars, banjos and other folk instruments that are played by, oh, six or seven people. There's a lot of interplay between the instruments, m/f vocals on top; it's all very nice, etc. It even works well live. But I'm just not interested in this sort of thing. Which is probably too bad, but if I'm want to listen to folky/country stuff, I'll choose John Hiatt.

- Andy Peters

SOULED AMERICAN
Flubber, lp
Rough Trade

During the time that I was knocked out of action due to an unspecified ailment, I received a pile of albums in the mail from our magnanimous editor; this was the one that stood out. I'd seen the band live, and came away really impressed. Just a buncha guys with acoustics, a bass and some drums, vocals with a drawl that's been hardened by too much whiskey, cigarettes and pain. But something got lost in the translation to vinyl. Maybe it's the production, or something; I don't know. Perhaps the live set is more immediate, more real. And something to look forward to.

- Andy Peters

TOAD THE WET SPROCKET
Blood And Circus, lp
CBS

My first reaction to this was, "WTF is a 'Toad The Wet Sprocket?'" Answer: yet another one of those post-Murmur-college-radio-jangly-guitar bands that all sound the same. I'd thought (hoped?) that this stuff was on the way out a couple of years ago, but I guess with the success of those guys from Athens, we'll be seeing (and hearing) more of this. Maybe they'll grow out of it. (Oh, and I still like Murmur, too.)

- Andy Peters

MIRANDA WARNING
It's All Part Of Growing Up, lp
Presto!, Box 1081, Lowell, MA 01853

HOLLOW HEYDAY
Abandoned, ep
Tantrum, Box 657, Cambridge, MA 02238

BITCH MAGNET
Umber, lp
Communion/Skyclad

Three bands, three records, but a single sound: that driving post-punk rock thing Homestead put on the map (and has pretty much discarded) - a dense wall of driving, distortion-crazy guitar noise, a throbbing melodic bass, fast drums, and intense vocals pushed to the max. That's not to say these 3 bands can't be distinguished. Miranda Warning are the catchiest, Hollow Heyday the most driving and fastest. Both from Boston and both trios, I wonder if they ever do gigs together? Bitch Magnet has come closest to breaking out of a strictly local-band rut (you can tell by all the cool bands you see in fanzine photos wearing Bitch Magnet t-shirts) and is probably the best, combining both Miranda Warning's pop sensibilities and Hollow Heyday's hard-driving intensity and thick sound.

- Jim T.

TRUE RUMOR
Knee Deep In Circumstance, CD
Minitrue, Box 2783 Church St. Sta., NYC 10008

True Rumor make music that owes a big debt to bands like Cowboy & Spingirl and their spiritual predecessors like Lets Active and the dBs. The clean guitars, lean vocals, and sprightly melodies aren't exactly the wave of the future, but there are a surprising number of these new-wave holdovers on the Jersey club scene - bands like the Blases and Fundamentals. This CD-only release of 13 songs should find favor among those of you who haven't shipped your old Romantics and Katrina & The Waves lps off to the Goodwill yet - solid, entertaining poppy rock 'n roll, played with an appealing earnestness. Cold-Iron said it reminded him of the Rolling Stones. I think that was a compliment.

- Jim T.

INTENSE MUTILATION
Safe Sex, lp
New Renaissance

Don't bother to remove this from its shrink-wrap record condom. Intense Mutilation makes a desperate attempt to get a rise out of the PMRC ladies with rants about vacuum cleaner blow jobs, fetus eating, and bowel movements. They even include a lyric sheet so Tipper won't miss 'em. Less shocking than the Dice man, less offensive than the Mentors. Like their Hoovers, I.M. sucks.

- Michele T.

MIND OVER FOUR
The Goddess, lp
Powerhouse

See what Queensryche started? Now not only is everyone flexing their falsettos, but they're doing it to socially conscious concepts. Mind Over Four covers all bases with dramatic vocals, trapeze artist guitar solos, and even an occasional mosh. "Ice Water Steam" and "Prayer For The Dying" are good antidotes for these days of empty-headed "Warrant" rock.

- Michele T.



MUSIC MARATHON

POST-ALTERNATIVE WHATSIT

Wednesday, October 25

CBGB Canteen - Slugfest, Our American Cousins

Technically, this was a Pre-CMJ show (PMJ?), since registration and whatnot didn't start until Thursday and anybody who could afford to come to New York a day early certainly wasn't going to spend their first night at the CBGB Canteen. I'm sure they were all off seeing "Cats" or something. Unfortunately, CBGB told the bands that they were indeed playing a CMJ showcase, which didn't prepare them for the turnout, which was sparse (to put it kindly). For me, this was more of what we in the Fanzine World call a "charity gig," Jon Ment of Slugfest being a buddy of mine and all. Anyway, Slugfest - a trio of college-age Brooklynite palookas who are making a name for themselves in the Scum Rock scene - were very cool, dedicating songs to everyone in the room and trotting out some funny new tunes, along with a cleaned up, de-distorted guitar and bass that had them sounding quite Ramonesish. Slugfest's brash wit and Brooklyn moxie are going to finish what the Dictators only started back in 1975, just mark my words. Our American Cousins seemed a bit disappointed by the turnout, screaming "Fuck CMJ, fuck CMJ!" when they realized they'd be playing their "showcase" for less than a half dozen people (at one point in the set, I was the audience). Still, they're quite an ok quartet; a heterogeneous bunch (black singer, girl bassist, everybody dressed in black, minimalist drums and a terrific guitarist) with some poppy tunes propelled by thumpy Kim Gordonish bass and some wild guitar harmonics. They even gave me a free copy of their 45. A nice start to what promised to be a busy couple days.



Big Drill Car

Photos by Jim Testa



Slugfest

by Jim Testa

The College Music Journal (CMJ) publishes a weekly listing of charts compiled by alternative and college radio stations, and hosts an annual music convention, much like the New Music Seminar, called The CMJ Music Marathon. This is some of what happened during those three days in 1989.

Thursday, October 26

Despite dozens of gigs at all sorts of venues, I wind up spending my evening at Nightingales, a crummy 2nd Avenue bar with the worst sound this side of The Jetty. I'm there to see Miranda Warning, a cool Boston pop/rock trio on Presto! Records, but because this show - like everything all weekend - was running a good hour behind schedule, I had to endure an entire set by Hypnolovewheel, a NYC combo with a (to me) unexplainable buzz. Meshing retro 6T's psych-rock with embarrassing Sonic Youth-cloned noise moves (including writhing on the floor during the obligatory distortion/feedback solo, a meatball act that wouldn't draw an amused sneer from the real SY), Hypnolovewheel drone on & on without ever producing one decent song. Miranda Warning turn out to be as cool as their lp, and I get to buy a beer for the President of their record label, the highlight of my evening.

Friday, October 27

Loeb Student Center, NYU - A great bill here tonight, featuring White Zombie, Bullet Lavolta, and Soundgarden, all of whom I miss, of course. I do catch the opening band, a local metal trio with a buzz called The Beautiful. A recent rave writeup in E.C. Rocker caught my eye - my fervent belief being that any band hyped by ECR almost always sucks - and the Rocker Rule of Thumb held true. Pretty boy frontman with a face made for MTV closeups poses and mugs thru a set of uninteresting songs, made almost unlistenable by a clod drummer with the heaviest hands this side of the Incredible Hulk. Heavy without being metal, pop, or particularly interesting. Next up were Primus, a SanFran trio who proved an unexpected treat - raging thrash/funk with insane vocals and rock-solid off-the-wall rhythms.

*From Loeb it was a quick jaunt crosstown to the Pyramid Club for SoCal popcore combo Big Drill Car. What can I say? Great sound, great songs, great moves. Pretty much in the vein of Descendents/All/early 7 Seconds, with stronger vocals and killer hooks. Check out their new lp on Cruz.

As Phil Earthpig and I are leaving the club flabbergasted, we bump into a statuesque young woman wearing nothing but two paper plates tied to her chest with a shoelace. Nice to see the old Pyramid Club isn't putting on airs to impress the tourists.

Hey, the night is still young, so I'm off to the new Tramps, now located on W. 21st Street. I just miss Toad The Wet Sprocket, who couldn't possibly be as bad as their name suggests, and catch Will & The Bushmen, who do an ok nuevo-Turtles thing: lots harmonies, twangy guitars, catchy tunes with a novelty twist. They're followed by Too Much Joy, a sappy, overaged L.A. powerpop band whose clever songs would go down a lot better if they didn't prance around the stage doing the Flopsy Mopsy Dance for their whole set. I mean, nobody's that happy, all right?

Timeout: Ever notice that when you're in a club and put your fingers in your ears, you can all of a sudden hear all the instruments and make out all the vocals? Does that mean that soundmen always crank the sound up too loud? Just asking.



Doughboys



Photos by Jim Testa

Big Wheel

After those three freshfaced, preppy alternative college-radio pop bands in the sta-prest slacks and button down shirts, no one in the club was really ready for Big Wheel, four gonzo mooks from Louisville in baggy shorts and hi-top sneakers who threatened to bring down the newly-plastered ceiling with their first wail. Featuring ex-Squirrel Bait mouth Peter Searcy, Big Wheel make a big, meaty noise that seems equally influenced by Squirrel Bait's familiar mix of punk icons (Burma, Huskers, Wire) and the Wheel's own '70's speedmetal heroes. Is Searcy the "big wheel" here? The joke being that the other 3 guys are each at least a foot taller than he is. Still, Peter's matured as a leader, heartier and more assured than the green kid who fronted Squirrel Bait, and that voice still has an undeniable charisma. Although the U2-inspired guitar falls short of Dave Grubbs' grungemetal mindfuck, Big Wheel come a lot closer to the old 'Bait whammy than either Bastro or Slint, the other two post-Bait bands making the scene these days. By the time the Wheel got to the 20-minute cover of Deep Purple's "Highway Star" - 3/4 of the band flailing barechested across the tiny stage - the record label types in blue suits were spuming vodka martinis out of their ears and the college radio girls in attendance were throwing their bras and panties at the band. Check out Big Wheel's debut lp on Giant Records, reviewed this issue.

Timeout:

Port Authority Bus Terminal, 2:50 a.m. - Ever notice how people who sit next to you on the bus at 3 a.m. always smell a lot worse than people who sit next to you during the day?

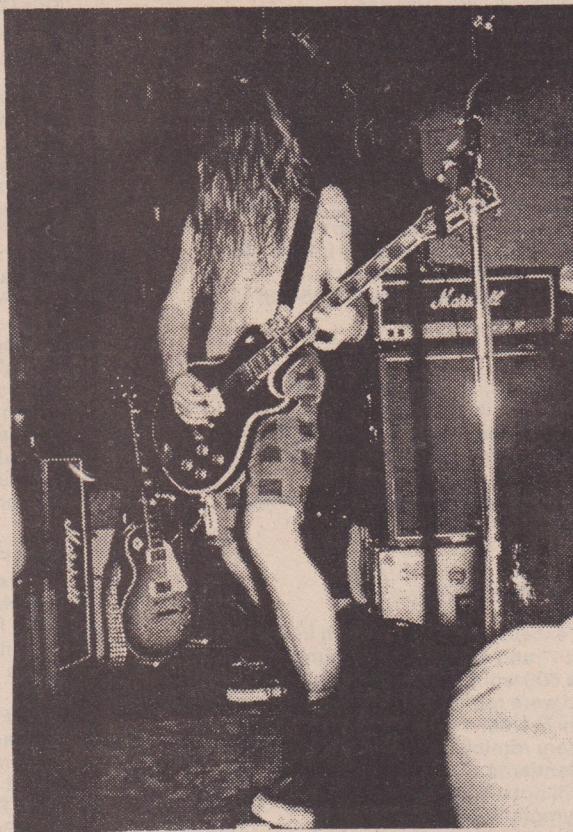
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CMJ Music Marathon - The Panels

Two big themes kept coming up during the panels. The first was the major labels' obvious push into alternative marketing, which means they're sending records to fanzines now. Whoopee. I would point out that the majors have not yet followed this up with any sort of commitment to fanzine advertising, which means that although they want the zines to review their records and interview their bands, they still expect the "underground" - small labels like Homestead and Caroline, who buy most fanzine advertising, and bands who put out their own records and buy the rest - to pay the freight. It will be interesting to see what happens. I remember Mykel Board at 1988's CMJ confab arguing that fanzines shouldn't review any major label product. I don't agree with that - I'm willing to take things on a band by band basis - but it'll be interesting to see what happens. Especially in a year or two when all these alternative bands fail to sell more than 50,000 or so records, dismal failures by major label standards. Then let's see how "alternative marketing" fares.

Despite a lot of lip service to fanzines, CMJ didn't actually invite many to participate. Panels on "Creating An Underground Buzz" and "Interacting With Your Local Scene" cried out for some fanziner's point of view. And the "fanzine panel" itself was woefully lame, full of people who don't write and rarely read fanzines (from "freelance" - i.e. unemployed - journalist Dave Sprague, a horrendous choice for moderator, to Gina Arnold, a neat writer but pretty much a professional hack these days). There were two real fanzines represented on a panel of about 8 people - Byron Coley from Forced Exposure (the only halfway funny and informed guy there) and Rob O'Connor from Throat Culture. I mean, really, if they were only going to invite two zines, couldn't they find one that's published more than one issue?

The other big theme was the emergence of a new genre, which doesn't have a name yet. It'll probably wind up being called Alternative Metal or Heavy Alternative; or how about Post-Alternative Metal? The trick is marketing bands that really aren't Heavy Metal under that label: Faith No More, Soundgarden, Nonesuch, White Zombie, Bullet Lavalta, Goo Goo Dolls, all these names and more came up as PAM bands to watch for. And why? Because ever since Metallica (and in another way, Guns 'N' Roses), major labels have realized that bands that can't get radio play or benefit from old-fashioned rock marketing can have Big Hit Records, as long as the public perceives them as legit trendsetters. This is no more than a variation on the old Next Big Thing syndrome - Is it Punk or New Wave? - but if it helps Bullet Lavalta or the Goo Goo Dolls sell records, I'm all for it.



Doughboys

Photo by Jim Testa

Saturday, October 28

I started the evening out with a visit to the delightful Lismar Lounge on First Avenue, home to some of the finest biker scum, poolroom riff raff, and East Village trash to be found anywhere. The Didjits have cancelled and Philly's Deadspot isn't scheduled until much later, but I do catch 3/4 of a set by NYC's Unsane, one of the better post-Sonic Youth "noise" bands. Unlike Hypnolovewheel, the Unsane don't camp it up or pander to anyone's misguided idea of "cool." Unaffectedly, they just crank it up to 11 and let it bleed. Your ears, that is. Thick, dense waves of tissue-melting distortion and feedback, fueled by manic drums and bass. Guaranteed to clear up your sinuses.

From the Lismar it's just a few blocks back over to the Pyramid for Canada's Doughboys. I get there about 3 songs into the set, and the band (as well as the audience) is already soaking wet and generating more energy than Con Ed. Popcore? Yeah, well, ok, you can call it that - fast, catchy, throbbing, with a definite 70's trashpunk aesthetic; not campy like Redd Kross, but so good it's almost naughty, like real early Kiss or Alice Cooper. Without resorting to scatology or four-letter words, the Doughboys make rock 'n' roll so hard and good that your parents would be scared just by the sheer visceral force of it.

Post-Alternative Whatsit

Bastards/Cows/Unsane NYC/Pagans
 "Scumbait #1" EP - 7" compilation
 Minneapolis' Bastards and Cows are two bands I just can't understand. People tell me that they're part of the same "scene" as Halo Of Flies. They do live in the same town but someone please explain to me why the Bastards and Cows don't both suck outright. Ditto for our own Unsane NYC, who can move to Minneapolis for all I care. But buy this record anyhow. The Pagans are on it (covering the Who, live) and in about a year you'll be able to sell it for enough dough to recoup your initial investment and buy a blank tape for the Pagans track.
 (Treehouse, Box 80037, Minneapolis MN 55408)

Grand High Potentates
 "Batman/ Psycho"
 If this isn't the Cramps, it's an incredible simulation! The A-side is a grunge job on the Batman theme. The B-side is a country ditty about a psycho killer. This record is better than I'm making it sound.
 (Unga Bunga, no address; available at Midnight Records)

Some Velvet Sidewalk
 "Earthbound"/"Land"
 The A-side is an excellent original, much in the vein of their first 7" and cassettes. It sounds like what Galaxie 500 would sound like if all three of their members were replaced by the three members of King Kong. The B-side, a Patti Smith cover, is a little annoying. Very reminiscent of 1/2 Japanese's covers on "1/2 Gentlemen, Not Beasts." I love 1/2 Jap, but that's still not a compliment.
 (K, Box 7154, Olympia WA 98507)

The Singles Scene by Ken Katkin

Cheetah Chrome & Jeff Dahl
 "Still Wanna Die"/"Don't Wanna Understand"
 This record embodies a number of the strains in rock 'n roll that I normally object to: the "party rock" ambience, the predictable lyrics and song structure, the lack of passion. But as journeyman rock goes, Mr. Chrome and Mr. Dahl are heartening. Their playing and even singing are so tasteful and so right that this record is a total winner in spite of itself. I'm not kidding.
 (Sympathy For The Record Industry, 4901 Virginia Ave., Long Beach, CA 90805)

Sobering Consequences
 "Like It Or Lump It"
 Memphis has a rep for being musically asleep of late, tho I guess every town has a "hardcore" scene. Funny thing is, what they call hardcore down there sounds more to me like what we call "ROCK" (or maybe "emo-core") up here. That's okay by me, this is a fine record, esp. the Wipers-type B-side (recorded 2 years ago, unfortunately.)
 (Truant, Box 42185, Memphis TN 38104)

Mudhoney
 "This Gift"/"Baby Help Me Forget"
 The A-side really is Mudhoney's last gasp - a great single that is the last one they're gonna release. The lp, which features this single, is lame, and even their still-excellent live shows can't hid the fact that Mudhoney's songwriting is running out of steam. But "This Gift" is a heroic effort, a worthy successor to the two previous singles. The forgettable B-side, a cover of a tune by singer Mark Arm's high school band, is better than the lp cuts. For some real action, check out the 12" version, which also includes a cover of Spacemen 3's manifesto, "Revolution."
 (Sub-Pop, Box 20645, Seattle WA 98102)

Untamed Youth
 "Santa's Gonna Shut 'Em Down"/"Santa's Midnight Run"
 Norton Records, an arm of the flawless Kicks fanzine, is usually quite well-loved by me! But this dud is one Xmas 7" that no one is gonna spin in January!
 (Norton, Box 646 Cooper Station, NY, NY 10019)

Boys From Nowhere
 "Rocket To Nowhere"
 Two Hour Trip
 "Dear Richard"
 A limited 650-pressed, split 7" featuring "two songs by two Ohio bands covered by two Ohio bands to be included in a nonexistent Ohio fanzine: DATAPANIK." Boys From Nowhere, one of America's greatest bands, covers an old Mike Rep & The Quotas tune, in a very Lyres-esque way. Two Hour Trip, who I don't know anything about, fail to add much to a great Peter Laughner song.
 (182 Butties, #1, Columbus OH 43215)

Da Willys
 "A Case Of Da Willys" EP
 Da Willys are the very best of the seemingly infinite crop of current Brooklyn bands. They sound a lot like fellow standouts the Lunachicks. But even the best of the bunch from that sorry borough make me thank God that it's Maxwells, and not Lauterbachs, that I can walk to from my house.
 (Baylor, 48 Monitor Street, Brooklyn NY 11222)

Original Rays
 "Lori Lori"/"The System"
 Somewhat appealing, but NJ's fratrock bands are better than Brooklyn's.
 (Brooklyn Beat, 335 Prospect Ave, Brooklyn, NY)

Bruisers
 "Intimidation" 4-song EP
 Surprisingly catchy skinhead pop from New England. Not in the contemporary moshin' style of Cro-Mags or any of the NY skinhead bands (except maybe the Radicts) - much more in the late 70's/British pop style of, say, the Sniveling Shits or Blitz. They're not white supremacists, although their lyrics are only one step up from that pro-violence stuff that proves yet again that when it comes to skinheads, you can always judge a book by its cover.
 (Patriot, 19 Center Street, Provincetown MA 02657)

Bad Karma
 "George Washington Smoked Pot & Owned Slaves" EP
 Very New Brunswick effort from what I believe is a new band from the hub city. Not too much going on musically on this record, but they do demonstrate some potential. Wait for the next one.
 (Red Ghost, 315 4th Ave., Haddon Hts NJ 08035)

Halo Of Flies

"Death of A Fly"/"Spit It Out"

Another total fucking rocker from Hazelmeyer & Co. This band is totally incredible - an MC5 for the 90's. The new 7" doesn't stake out any new territory for HoF, but it rocks heavy & hard! (Amphetamine Reptile, 2541 Nicollette Ave. S., Minneapolis MN 55404)

The Singles Scene

by Ken Katkin

Love Battery

"Between The Eyes"/"Easter"

I don't know a damn thing about these guys (Ed. Note - but it's definitely not the Philadelphia Bryan Willette/Jeff Fox Love Battery) but this is an outright great record. Carving out the territory in-between the Embarrassment and the Nazz, but with the kind of power more typified by the Who and DMZ, Love Battery strike me as a band to watch for. Their single is on Sub-Pop but it's not even a limited edition.

(Sub-Pop, Box 20645, Seattle WA 98102)

Deadspot

"Built In Pain" EP

There is definitely a fuss about these Philly boys, but I'll be damned if I know why. They can play a very competent version of Mudhoney-ish screamin' rock, but their vocalist needs a laxative and their songwriting needs some work. One of those bands that shriek every fourth line. Come to think of it, they're suspiciously metal.

(Letterbomb, 619 S. 4th St, Philadelphia PA 19147)

Rapeman

"Song #1"/"Inki's Butt Crack"

The Rapeman/Fugazi parallels are becoming as fascinating as the Kennedy/Lincoln ones. To add to the lore, Sub-Pop is releasing 7"s by each band of the first song they ever wrote. In both cases, the song was entitled "Song #1." Let's hope the Fugazi one will be better than this Rapeman effort, an annoying exercise in fake endings. The B-side, based on the theme from an old tv cartoon, is good, but don't even think of paying over \$3.99 for this limited release.

(Sub-Pop)

Bhang Revival

"Never Look Back"/"Running, Hiding"

Bhang Revival are an all-female trio from Chicago. But they sound so much like the Lunachicks, you'd think they were from Brooklyn.

(Snake Eye, 3422 N. Lincoln Ave, Chicago IL 60657)

The Wretched Ones

"Old, Loud & Snotty" EP

Sexist trype from a band whose name doesn't lie. I'm surprised they ever heard of the Dead Boys.

(Headache, 47 Myrtle Ave., Midland Park NJ 07432)

Death of Samantha

"Rosenberg Summer"/"Heroes"

Death Of Samantha started around 1985 as ultra-ambitious Clevelanders who were trying to claim for themselves the mantle of their homeland: the punk rock crown worn by the Dead Boys, the Pagans, X, Blank X, the Electric Eels, the Cramps, the Styrene Money Band, Pere Ubu, and most especially Peter Laughner & his Rocket From The Tombs. DoS frontman John Petkovic is a Laughneresque figure, waving the drunken, working class, intelligent/bemused banner of the midwest, flogging many dead horses, and writing songs to die for. Death Of Samantha have improved with every release, and with this 7", Petkovic has become Laughner's equal. In the future, he will become his better.

(Homestead)

Strangled Beatoffs

"White" EP

I was the only kid on my block to give the thumbs up to this Drunks With Guns spinoff band's debut 7". Now this 4-song ep of Beatoffs covers makes me realize what everyone else was complaining about. (Chopper, no address; avail. at Pier Platters in Hoboken)

Heretics

"Shrivel Up & Die"/"Mississippi Queen"

This sounds quite contempo for the usually retro Get Hip label. The problem is, it's not the good kinda contempo. Like too many 80's (90's) releases, it's a little too "partying" for me.

(Get Hip!, Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317)

Who reads Grot?

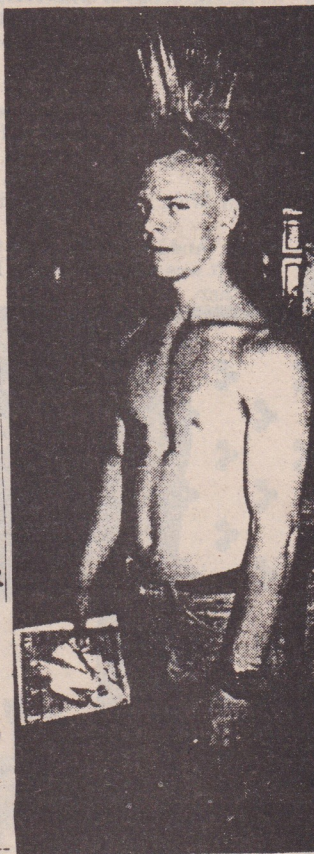
ISSUE #5

GWAR
Steel Pole
Bathtub
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Green Day
Reviews
Lotsa photos

ONLY ONE DOLLAR

Who doesn't?

151 First Avenue-Box A
New York, NY 10003



by Jim Testa

You're cruising the big highway just outside of town. It's 1972, the top of your dad's Caddy convertible's down and the wind's blowing through your hair. Deep Purple's "Machine Head" is in the 8-track player with the volume cranked up as high as she'll go and "Highway Star" is blasting away.

That'll give you a little idea of Big Wheel.

Fronted by ex-Squirrel Bait Peter Searcy, whose trademark yowl has grown chunkier and a little less raspy with seasoning, Big Wheel features the inspired pre-punk hard-rock riffing of Glenn Taylor on guitar, Mike Bradon on bass, and Scott Lankford on drums. We chatted for a while with Glenn and Peter from their home in Louisville, Kentucky.

Q: I understand that Big Wheel more or less developed very informally, you didn't just all get together and decide to start a band one day.

Glenn: Well, what happened was, Mike, Scott and I were in this band, The Ivy Beats. It was a cover band, and, uh, we were really bad. We used to play silly stuff and none of us could really sing, so we used to invite people to come up on stage and sing with us. It was almost kind of an informal way of looking for a singer, really. And I had actually heard a Squirrel Bait album, and the first time I heard Peter sing, I wanted him to sing in a band with me. I know how to write, but I can't sing, and I wanted him to sing what I was writing. But in the Ivy Beats, he'd just come up and do R.E.M. songs or whatever, and I think we did one or two Squirrel Bait covers, that may have been how it all started. But we just decided to be a real band after a while.

Peter: So you're saying you searched me out? I recall I got kicked out of a band and called you up and said 'let's get together...'

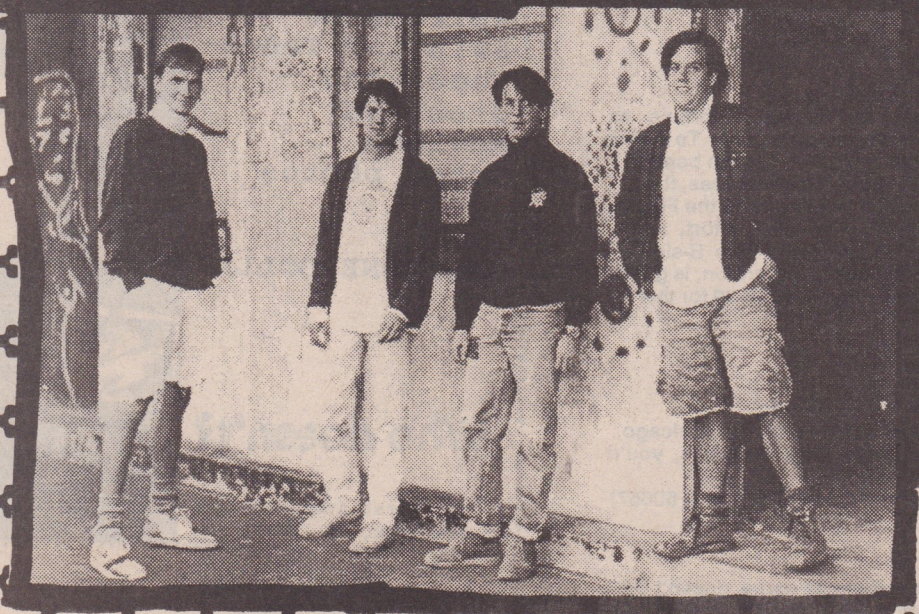
Glenn: Well, I knew I wanted you in the band to sing.

Peter: And I knew I wanted to be in a band with you, so... It was a mutual thing. It was a mutual coming together.

BIG

WHEEL

Sweatiest Band In Town



Continued on next page

Q: Peter, had you been doing anything between Squirrel Bait and Big Wheel?

Peter: Yeah, I had been in a band called Fanci Pantz, which was an odd collection of musicians here in Louisville. It was kind of like punk rock plus funk plus The Police. It was a strange thing. It was some of the best musicians in town, Ben Daughtrey the drummer from Squirrel Bait and two other guys. We talked to Geffen for a while but they told me they wanted me to sing like Michael Bolton and I really didn't want to do that. They said I spoke my words too much... Actually, we were still talking to them when we broke up.

Q: Do you know we have a Louisville contingent in Hoboken...like Tim and Tara from Antietam?

Peter: I didn't know that well when I was young because I was quite a bit younger than they were, but I really looked up to them and the Babylon Dance Band, and Wolf Knapp, who used to be in Antietam and his first band, Your Food. They were kind of my idols.

Q: Is Louisville a good place to have a band?

Peter: I wouldn't say it's a good place to have a band. It's a good place to live. And there are a lot of bands from here who are starting to get a lot of attention.

Glenn: I don't think it's necessarily a good place for bands because there are a lot of bars or whatever, but it's a good place to live. I think the lifestyle here is very good for bands. It almost reminds me of Boston. You don't have all the pressure and all the competition you'd have in a big city. Like New York City...I couldn't imagine how I could ever write a song in New York.

Peter: You have so few influences here as far as other bands, you're not really pressured by other bands or sounds. You can come up with your own sound.

Q: The bands from Louisville who have come up to New York to play have all been original and different from another.

Peter: I'm just trying to think of who's been up there. Slint, King Kong, Squirrel Bait...



Peter Searcy, singing with Squirrel Bait, 1986

Q: Antietam.

Peter: Right, Antietam, the Babylon Dance Band. And when you think about it, all those bands have kind of been related. Like if you did one of those family trees...

Glenn: I think if you look at who went to my high school, it just seems like all these different musicians all came from there.

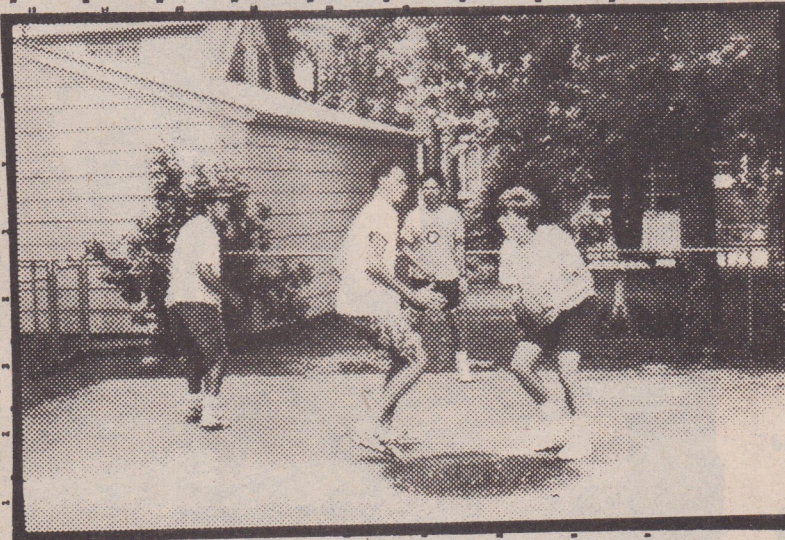
Peter: And like, with Squirrel Bait, we all went to school together.

Glenn: I knew Tim and Tara (from Antietam) since the second grade.

Q: One thing that's interesting to me, Peter, is that my understanding always was that Squirrel Bait broke up partly because some of the guys wanted to go to college and some wanted to be in a band. Now here you are in a new band with a member, Glenn, who's tied to college. (Taylor is a teaching assistant and Ph.D. candidate at the University of Kentucky.)

Peter: That's the easiest thing to say. That was the least of (Squirrel Bait's problems).

Glenn: I had a full scholarship to go to LSU (Louisiana State) and one to UK. And so I took the one to UK, which is just a few minutes from here, and next semester I'm only going to be taking one class, which is really sort of an independent study anyway, so my time is really going to be my own. And if I want to go away for a while with the band or whatever, I can work out a schedule where I can do that.



BIG WHEEL

Peter: In the Spring, we plan on touring just like any other band would. What Glenn has to do (for school), he can do during the hours and hours on tour you spend just sitting around in clubs or in the van killing time. I haven't had any problems with Glenn or Mike or Scott being in school. They seem serious enough about (the band). I think the problem in Squirrel Bait was more that Clark and Dave just wanted to get out of Louisville.

Because of the band, I gave up a classical music scholarship, because I wanted to pursue rock. I think one of the problems in Squirrel Bait might have been that Dave and Clark looked down on me because I wasn't in college.

Q: How come you're still doing several Squirrel Bait covers in Big Wheel if you have so many bad feelings about the band?

Peter: When you're playing out, sometimes people come out and they know I sang for Squirrel Bait. And I liked being in Squirrel Bait, and I liked the songs, a lot. And as far as playing Squirrel Bait songs, I don't want to disappoint an audience who knew I sang for Squirrel Bait who might want to hear one or two of those songs.

Glenn: We don't always do it. We just played last Saturday and we didn't do any of the Squirrel Bait songs. I think they're good songs. I have no problem playing them. It doesn't bother me at all to do an old song now and then.

Peter: Maybe I'm not an artist enough to think I'm just gonna forget about this and go off and do something else. And, you know, Squirrel Bait didn't tour very much. A lot of people don't have any idea what we looked like or what the songs would have sounded like...not that we're Squirrel Bait by any means. But it's nice that they can hear it live now.

Q: Back to Big Wheel. If there's a general theme to the lp, there seems to be this coming of age feel to most of the lyrics.

Glenn: First I just want to point out that Peter writes all the lyrics. That didn't get printed correctly on the album and I feel really bad about that, and I want to make sure he gets credit. So if you like the words, Peter is the one who wrote them.

Q: Okay, Peter....

Peter: I'm 21. And I'm starting to realize that it's time to slow down a bit. I don't know if slow down is right, but it's time to start taking things a little more seriously. And I watch a lot of my friends around me and some of them are...

Glenn: Screw ups!

Peter: Yeah, screw ups. And I love them to death. And I have a lot of really close friends, a lot of people I could call best friends, and I'm watching them go downhill. And I don't want to write songs about that, but it's what I'm thinking about a lot. So I don't know if it's me coming of age, but a lot of those songs are about people I know.

Q: I know on Squirrel Bait's Skag Heaven you covered Phil Ochs' "Tape From California," and your phrasing reminds me a lot of his singing. Were you a big Phil Ochs fan?

Peter: I didn't listen to that much Phil Ochs, really, but I grew up in your typical hippy household. There was always folk music or something of that sort on the turntable. Not that I ever wanted to, or not that it's what I listen to by choice, but when I think about music, I think about it as folk songs.

Q: I understand you write songs on an acoustic guitar?

Peter: Yeah, I don't know if I want to do that anymore. Right now I think I'm at a point where I need to get an electric guitar just to come up with different things. But I have been writing on acoustic. Most of the songs on our album, if you heard me and Glenn do them on acoustic guitars, they'd sound like folk songs.

Q: Glenn, what's your musical background?

Glenn: What do you mean by background?

Peter: Angel and Starz!

Glenn: Well, I played trumpet for years, all through school and in bands. Senior year I actually played the harp. And then I got interested in playing the guitar, and I finally went out and got one. I would listen to Genesis and Aerosmith and Elton John.

Q: The riffing you do on the lp is definitely from that era. It's almost like you're writing songs for 8 tracks.

Peter: (laughing) Hey, man, that's a compliment!

Glenn: The funny thing is that my mom still has a '78 Cadillac Eldorado, the largest car ever made. And it still has an 8 track player that works.

Peter: And what 8 tracks do you still have, Glenn?

Continued on next page



Glenn: Uh, Cat Scratch Fever...

Peter: I think I have a Seals & Crofts, and a Saturday Night Fever. They were both my uncle's.

Q: There seems to be this enormous bring back the 70's thing going on now.

Peter: I don't think we're part of that.

Glenn: I like to think we play sort of like the Beatles.

Peter: I don't know about that.

Glenn: Well, it's still rock and roll.

Peter: I think the hardest thing I have is writing the songs. I don't want to write a million love songs and I don't want to write your standard rock songs, but I don't have...I guess I need more conflict in my life. That sounds horrible to say, but if you don't want to write anything that's superficial, you need turmoil.

Q: The image of the band that emerges from the record and press material is like the photos on your lyric sheet - four cleancut guys in a suburban backyard playing basketball.

Peter: I wouldn't describe myself as cleancut, but I guess I wouldn't describe myself as a rock 'n roll derelict either. I don't know. I guess that's sort of right.

Q: The show I saw at Tramps for the CMJ convention, three of you looked like triplets and then Glenn kinda stood out. Is that typical of the way you look?

Peter: It all depends. I think we're still trying to find ourselves in terms of our shows.

Glenn: The thing was, I think we were all a little uptight. The funny thing is the next night we played in Connecticut for about 18 people and we played a great show. But that wasn't a bad show. We uniformly play good shows. I mean, we really don't screw up the songs. The only thing we have trouble with is how we present ourselves. There I think we are still trying to find ourselves.

Peter: Well, Glenn, I'm sorry, but you're no fashion statement. Mike goes out and buys Armani suits and spends hundreds of dollars on clothes. And Mike and I just keep wearing the same old smelly shorts, or we take our oldest pants and cut 'em up and make 'em into shorts.

Glenn: I just try to be the rebel and wear whatever doesn't fit in, thumbing my nose at whatever's hip.

Q: You just looked so out of it that night, the other three guys were sweating so hard they had their shirts off and you were wearing a long sleeved paisley shirt and long pants.

Peter: Oh, talking about the shirts off... We played the other night and Glenn took his shirt off and, um, Glenn's a thin guy. And it kinda gave us that Desperate Guitar Player On Heroin look that we oh so need. When we were thinking of a slogan for ourselves about a year ago, we thought, well, we're not the loudest band in the world but we're probably the sweatiest.

Q: I enjoy it when a band looks like they're having fun and really putting a lot into it.

Peter: We really haven't been tried yet as far as the road. We played a couple of dates in a row. But I never want to go on stage and not give it my all. When we played for 18 people the night after the CMJ show, it wasn't the greatest place to play but we gave it every ounce of our energy.



Minneapolis Scene Report

Mile One: Everybody knows this is nowhere



Photo by Lisa Albright Pat Schmid

Minneapolis became known in the '80's as a great town for bands, and it spawned some of the decade's best acts, from Husker Du to the Replacements. But any scene has got to answer the question, "So whaddaya done for me lately?" One of the best things we heard out of Minneapolis in 1989 was a self-released cassette called "Coolidge's Suitcase" by a young band called Mile One, who managed to make visits to New York for both the New Music Seminar in July and the CMJ Music Marathon in October. Their song "Sunbird" was included on CMJ's "Certain Damage Vol. 14" compilation CD, and has also been made into a frenetic, almost psychedelic video that captures the band's tight, tough song songcraft and energetic live performance. Their July visit to NY caught the eye of our intrepid reporter, Lisa Albright, who's been following their exploits ever since. Here's her interview with Mile One - on being a band, Minneapolis, and the state of rock and roll. Answering are Chuck Hermes (bass), Paul Hermes (guitar) and Pat Schmid (vocals); not present was drummer Brad Mattson, formerly of the band Stickman.

Q: Your sound seems to defy everything that's supposedly "in" right now. You have a very clean guitar sound, a light melodic bass, and thoughtful lyrics. What do you think of the current trends in underground music, and where do you think Mile One fits in?

Chuck: I myself don't even know what trendy is right now. If it's Soundgarden or Mudhoney, or just distorted guitars or whatever it is, fine, but we're not that. We don't care about trendy.

Paul: We're doing what we like to do.

Pat: I feel like I'm singing what somebody else did already. Sometimes I don't. I don't know if you call that trendy or not.

Q: You seem to put a lot of effort into your songwriting and arrangements. Can you talk about your approach to creating new songs?

Chuck: First of all, I think a lot of bands have gotten lazy in the last 5 years or so...

Paul: Six years.

Chuck: ...six years. They don't spend a whole lot of time with their songwriting and they don't learn their instruments. They just throw songs together and leave them the way they are, and they don't really work at them. We tend to spend more time with the details.

*'We don't want to be
a 'Pop' band.*

*We want to be a
rock 'n roll band'*

- Pat Schmid

Pat: Sometimes when we start a song, it's all there but it's not finished. So it gives you a more dreamy... dreamy's all I can think of but not dreamy...

Chuck: Loose.

Pat: Yeah, loose. So that too. We try to be careful not to be too tight and polished. But like Chuck said, I think they all know their instruments very well so even when it's just a jam, everything's really tight still.

Q: What are the audiences in Minneapolis like? Do you have a steady crowd that you can draw?

Chuck: Local crowds, well...

Paul: They come and they go. It's not a real good time in Minneapolis for rock and roll, I guess. Because Minneapolis has been overrated. The whole Prince thing has passed. The Replacements, the Husker Du thing has passed. Now the crowds in Minneapolis have gotten more of an attitude than the musicians have, and they're almost too cool for their own local talent these days. Although we still do have our own certain following. But beyond that, not many bands stand out and draw huge crowds anymore, just because it's a bad time right now in Minneapolis.

Q: I assume Chuck and Paul Hermes are brothers. How does having two brothers in the band affect the band's chemistry?

Paul: Oh yeah, we're brothers. I'm Paul, Chuck's the younger one.

Chuck: Yeah, we're pretty much brothers.

Q: And how does that affect the band?

Paul: I think it's pretty good. We don't really get in many fights. I can still kick Chuck's ass.

Chuck: I think that's a crock of shit. And basically, I don't think it would matter if we were brothers, sisters, or had absolutely no bloodline whatsoever.

Q: What's been your experience been having placed a song on a CMJ Certain Damage CD? Was it worth it?

Pat: Worth it or not? It probably was. We can't really tell right now, because we did it and sent it out and people got to hear it. We got some calls from it but nobody's come up and gave us anything yet. But it stirs things up around the country, not just around the area. But it's the kind of thing where, is anything worth it? You never really know what steps are going to take you where, and how you're gonna get there. And it's just a step, so it's hard to tell. But it might be worth it and we might not find out for five years. Or maybe tomorrow.

Chuck: It really wasn't that expensive. But we're kind of in a bad situation as far as management. We don't have a record label. We have nobody representing us. Maybe if there was somebody out hustling us, it would have brought us more attention.

Paul: Chuck pretty much handles the band now.

Chuck: And I've been pretty lazy lately. Speaking of the New Music Seminar...

(somebody whispering) It was a waste of time

Paul: It wasn't a waste of time. That too was like the CMJ thing. It all went along with it.

Chuck: It was worthwhile because...

Paul: It was just way cool out there.

Chuck: Yeah, there's some way cool people out there.

Pat: It was fun just to get out of the Minneapolis/Midwest area, and go out there and see bums and starving people and meet David Whittaker.

Chuck: Well, nothing really came out of our Seminar performance. But we got out there and played other clubs and stuff, so it was worth it.

*'The crowds in Minneapolis
have more of an attitude
than the musicians...*

*They're almost too cool
for their own good'*

- Chuck Hermes



*Pat Schmid
on stage in Minneapolis*

Q: What's radio like in Minneapolis?

Chuck: All I can say is, most of the radio in this metropolitan area can lick the sweaty, greasy butt boils of Gus our soundman. Period.

Pat: Fresh Air Radio is kinda cool sometimes. It's just a community radio station, it's interesting to listen to.

Chuck: To tell you the truth, they play about two hours of progressive music a week on that station and zero on any other station.

Pat: But it's fun sometimes to listen to the blues and the jazz on that station. But as far as the radio scene helping the music scene, it's not doing a whole lot.

Chuck: Nil. As far as college radio too, it's all on cable. So you can't get it in your car, you can't get it anywhere [but on the campuses] so it doesn't help.

Q: Can you talk about the high you get from performing?

Chuck: No.

Q: Is there anything you hate about it?

Pat: Sometimes, it's like when we write the songs. In the beginning, it's a good groove, it's fun to do and everything. But night after night, playing and playing and playing, sometimes you don't have anything left to give. Even though it's a different place, a different show, that brings some sort of excitement, yet you're doing the same thing night after night. And it's sometimes hard to repeat yourself. So that's why, a lot of the lyrics don't get finished until recordings. Just because I get bored of singing the same lyrics. Although it would be nice to have the lyrics down.

Q: Ok, let's face it. You guys are pretty cute. Do you ever try to downplay that? I notice that a lot of times, you seem to dress really ratty looking.

Pat: We dress comfortably. And sometimes not.

Mile One



Chuck: I guess that goes back to image again. We don't have the image of a sexy band, we haven't tried to have the image of a sexy band. So we just kind of try and dress a little different than our crowds so we can be picked out.

Pat: I think, too, if you talk about trendiness, since we're not the heavy metal dirt grunge music, if we dressed "pretty," we'd be considered a "Pop" [with a British accent] band, and we don't want to be a Pop band. We want to be a rock and roll band. So we dress accordingly.

Chuck: Function.

Pat: You know, if you look good, you feel good. You feel good, you play good. You play good, you win.

Q: Comments?

Chuck: My only comment is that it's a major achievement for any band to just last right now in original music. Because it's just a really bad time for bands to be playing. Nobody can make any money, and nobody's supporting anybody, you know? And commercial music is almost back to the old disco days and it's really in a slump. And it's time for somebody to come and yank it back up to something exciting again, like what happened ten years ago with the Sex Pistols and Ramones. Are we the ones to do it?

Pat: What's the band about? There's a lot of influences in the world - people, places, things. It would be nice - what we're trying to do, what I'm trying to do - is be an influence. Depending on the subject, I don't know right now...just to be an influence toward my thoughts and feelings. Beer. Period.

Cheap Videos!

Wrong Conclusion has bootleg shows of Misfits, Einstürzende Neubauten, Gwar, Jane's Addiction, D.O.A., Circle Jerks, G.G. Allin, Cramps, Fugazi, Soulside, Government Issue, Charles Manson, S.N.F.U., Danzig, Rollins and more!

All shows are on quality video cassettes VHS, priced \$15 - 20.00. Send SASE for complete catalog to:

Wrong Conclusion
151 1st Avenue Box A
New York City, New York 10003

Recently, **Wrong Conclusion** was burglarized and we lost everything setting the already belated fanzine issue #4 back indefinitely. The video aspect has been forced to go in horrible debt and we hope you can help out with an order. Thanks - W.C. Crew.

LATE ARRIVALS

Fanzines

Rabid #5 (104 James St., Morristown NJ 07960) \$1
Short interviews and feisty reviews, Conflict-esque format.

Truant #3 (PO Box 42185, Memphis, TN 38104) \$2
Interviews, reviews, fun stuff, well done.

Robzine #14 (340 Sunnyside Ave, Toronto, Ont. Canada M6R 2R6) \$1
Sk8zine but no skate photos this issue; cool graphics w/ some text

Puke & Shot #3 (3943 Cumnor Rd., Downers Grv, IL 60515) \$1
Half-sized punkzine, a little messy but fun reading, the usuals.

Philly Zine #9 (% Sean, 101 Princeton Rd., Glassboro NJ 08028) \$2
Messy but readable punkzine, Mike Bullshit interview

Dagger #11 (PO Box 460, Somers Pt, NJ 08244) \$1.50
AntiSeen, Tad, Tar, and other monosyllabic punk stuff. Neato.

Godsend #12, 13 (% Todd, 1401 Fuquay Rd Evansville IN 47715) \$1
A 1/2 size punkzine. #12 most the usual intvw/reviews, #13 mostly eye-catching graphics. Unpredictable & worth checking out.

Seven #1, PO Box 141161, Cleveland OH 44114 \$5
Is this a fanzine or a record? Well, both. It comes with a Ghost Sonata 7", a fanzine devoted entirely to 7" records, and lots of other junk, like little pamphlets and a Ghost Sonata bio. Amazingly cool.

Whatever Ramblings, 5 Greenview Ave, Princeton NJ 08540 50 cents + 2 stamps
I got the first 3 issues - kinda messy xeroxed zine that mostly just the editor and his friends rambling about whatever's on their mind. Which sounds boring, only it's not.

Records

MOVING TARGETS, Brave Noise (Taang)
Driving, grotesque punkcore, in the same vein as Bullet Lavolta (not surprising, since they share guitarist Kenny Chambers).

WARLOCK PINCHERS, Deadly Kung Fu Action (Boner)
Satanic hip hop kung fu noise rock from Denver, Colorado, from a band of precocious teen goons who worship Crispin Glover, despise Morrissey, and make some righteous funky punktoons.

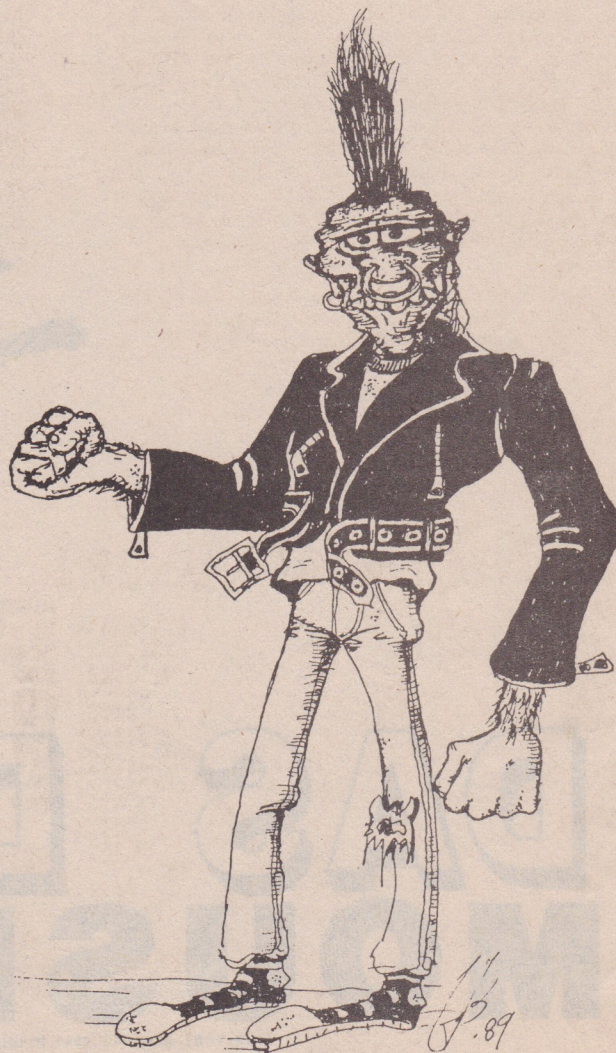
MAXIMUM ROCK N ROLL PRESENTS: They Don't Get Paid, They Don't Get Laid, But Boy Do They Work Hard!, compilation lp (Maximum R'n'R)
This compilation is dedicated to the spirit of DIY (Do It Yourself) punk, featuring 14 cool bands and a 24-page booklet with pages from 10 fanzines. The music rocks, and includes probably the last new songs you'll ever hear from Dead Silence and Screeching Weasel, as well as good-to-great cuts from Jawbox, Dissent, and Cringer. The fanzine is a bit disappointing, although the contributions from Hippycore and Village Noize address the DIY issue nicely.

WHAT ARE YOU POINTING AT?, Compilation lp (Very Small Records)

David Hayes of Very Small Records is releasing a series of hardcore compilations on 10" vinyl, a project so rabidly anti-commercial that it deserves a plug for pure punk-rock feistiness alone. This disc has 6 bands who mostly all sound alike but it does feature Screeching Weasel's "I Wanna Be A Homosexual" (co-written with JD's editor Bruce LaBruce) and it comes on colored marble vinyl, so buy it for its collector's value if nothing else.
(PO Box 8223, Emeryville, CA 52244)

THIRD TIMES A CHARM: The Iowa Compilation Vol. III, CD (SouthEast)
18 songs by 18 groups you probably never heard of (Dangtrippers, Full Fathom 5, and House Of Large Sizes may be familiar), featuring mostly off-center punk rock. I wish the three Jersey CD compilations I heard this year were anywhere near this good. (PO Box 3031, Iowa City, Iowa 52244)

WIRE, On Returning (1977-1979), CD (Restless)
As part of the Restless Retro series, this CD unites Wire's first 3 lp's, for less than you'd pay currently for the import CD of Pink Flag by itself. Right on.





DAS DAMEN MOUSETRAP

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